

MAY 26, 1922

No. 869

7 Cents

FAME AND

FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

IN THE NEWSPAPER GAME
OR THE RISE OF A CUB REPORTER

AND OTHER STORIES

By A Self-Made Man



He felt the chute bend more and more under his weight, then, with a splitting sound, it suddenly parted under him. He fell forward and instinctively caught the two sides of the end held by Sam and Billy.

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

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NEW YORK, MAY 26, 1922

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In the Newspaper Game

OR, THE RISE OF A CUB REPORTER

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.—The Great Jewel Robbery.

"Not a regular in the room," said City Editor Brown, as he hung up the receiver of his desk telephone and looked around the room; "only that cub reporter, and Jackson wants me to rush him a first-class man. He's on an important case and expects to cop a beat. What the dickens shall I do? As time is everything I'll have to take a chance on the kid. Chester!"

"Yes, sir," replied a bright-looking lad of eighteen who was seated at the reporter's table reading a copy of the morning paper, springing up and hurrying to the city editor's desk.

He was a new hand in the office of the Morning Planet, of Rushville—more of a hanger-on than anything else, for during his three weeks connections with the paper he had only occasionally been called on to do work, and the assignments he got were comparatively unimportant. The amount of money he had so far collected from the cashier did not pay for his feed. He was paid at the paper's ordinary space rate, \$5 a column, and the total amount of his work that had passed into circulation amounted to half a column. This was rather discouraging to even an enthusiastic tyro in the newspaper game who had no great amount of funds to live on while he was struggling for recognition, but Tom Chester was not easily discouraged. He had made up his mind to be a reporter, a successful one, for he believed he had the germ in him, and he possessed the "sand" to hang up till he got the chance to show that he could make good.

There were two or three other extra men on the paper who came in ahead of him because they had been there longer. Each one of these had had at least one chance to show what he could do, but had not made a particularly brilliant showing. One of them, a college graduate named Otis Cobb, son of a well-to-do merchant in town, who owned a few shares of stock in the newspaper, essayed to be a sporting reporter, and was occasionally used by the sporting editor. He was a good dresser, as he could afford to be without reference to what he made, and carried himself with a swing that was intended to say "I'm the cheese," but he did not set the office on fire either by his manners or newspaper ability. He was "hail-fellow-well-met" with the regulars because he had money to spend and spent it freely, but he had no use for the third-raters, though he was one himself, and

likely to stay so as long as he remained with the paper.

After getting well acquainted, and going out on easy work, his chance came one day, owing to luck, to cover an important football game. As he claimed to know the game from A to Z, and had been a substitute on his college eleven, the sporting editor expected him to do fairly well. He was told when he started out that the assignment offered him the chance that all new reporters were looking for. He assured the sporting editor that his story would be right up to snuff. Then he went to the game and fell down badly. He was prejudiced against one of the teams and showed it. He failed to get the facts that every newspaper wants, and slipped up in so many ways that his story, after passing the copy editors, made a poor showing for his paper, and the sporting editor got a call down in consequence. Since then Otis Cobb had been more ornamental than useful, but he held his head just as high as ever.

For some reason he took a special dislike to Tom Chester, and sneered at the lad's efforts as a cub reporter. But to return to the city editor's desk.

"Chester, take a cab and go out to the corner of Webster avenue and Linden street. In the saloon you will meet Jackson. Take your orders from him. Here's an order on the cashier for your expenses. Any excess you can return when you get back. Now off with you, and get out there as quick as you can," said Brown, in sharp, incisive accents.

Tom had his hat in his hand so he didn't have to return to the table for it. He hustled out through a corridor into the reception-room, where a small boy sat at a table and attended to visitors, thence out into the main corridor of the building, caught a down elevator and was soon standing in front of the cashier's pen, waiting for the bill that was shoved out to him. One could generally find an unemployed cab in the vicinity of the Planet office. Tom found one, gave the driver his directions, told him to rush, and was presently speeding toward his destination. In due time the cub reporter reached the corner he was sent to, told the cabman to wait and, starting to enter the saloon, came face to face with Jackson.

"What the dickens brought you out here?" said the star reporter of the Planet, staring at Tom, whom he recognized.

"Mr. Brown sent me out. Said I'd get my orders from you," replied the boy.

Jackson uttered a mild imprecation.

"Confound it, I want an experienced man. You're only a cub. Brown must have been off to send you here. He knows how important the case is I'm on."

"It's the Anderson diamond robbery, isn't it?"

"Yes, and I think I've spotted the rascals. There's three in the game, and I can't handle the case without help. That's why I sent for a man to help me out, and here Brown sends me an inexperienced kid. Wasn't there any one else in the office?"

"Not a soul."

"But it's time some of the boys were coming in with their afternoon work."

"None had come in. Tell me what you want me to do and I'll take hold."

"You may have to shadow a man. Think you can do it without giving yourself away?"

"I'll do my best, Mr. Jackson. I'm in the newspaper game to make good, and I don't propose to miss any chance that comes my way."

Jackson had been alternately keeping his eye on the front door of a house a short distance away, and studying the deportment of the cub reporter, whom he regarded as a most unsatisfactory assistant in this emergency. He realized that he had to use him or send him back and go it alone. He decided to use him, for he wanted somebody to watch the rear of the house and follow any one that came out that way. He had ascertained the position of the back door, and from where he had been watching for half an hour he could tell if any one left the house that way; but if it wasn't the particular person he was especially interested in he could not afford to leave the neighborhood and follow him.

As the case stood he would have to depend on the cub reporter to do that. Having no great opinion of cub reporters in general he was not pleased to be obliged to depend on one. He gave Tom his orders and told him to dismiss the cab. Instead of dismissing the cab on the corner as he had been told to do. Tom told the driver to take him to the corner below, where he paid the man and let him go. Jackson, not divining the boy's purpose, swore under his breath at the lad's stupidity, and looked after the cab till he saw it stop, Tom get out and hand the driver something, after which the vehicle continued on.

"Why in thunder did he go down there to dismiss the cab when he could have saved time by shaking it here?" he growled. "He'll make a nice mess of this thing. Darn Brown for sending him. He might just as well have sent me a wooden Indian."

Then Jackson returned to his post. Tom walked up the back street toward the house, keeping his eyes wide open for some spot where he could ensconce himself and command an unobstructed view of the rear of the premises he had to watch. Nearly opposite the back of the house was a vacant lot which was several feet below the street level. A wooden sidewalk six feet wide ran in front of the lot. The sidewalk was supported by posts driven into the ground, and the entire space under it up to the curb line was hollow. Tom cut across to the lot and

jumped down into it. He walked along under the sidewalk to a point where he saw the light shining through from the street, and found it proceeded from a break in the curb stones. Looking through the hole he found himself facing the house he had to shadow.

"This is a great piece of luck," he thought. "I can see without being seen."

He congratulated himself on his good fortune, and kept one of his sharp eyes alternately on the grim, unpainted building.

"Jackson is one of the best reporters in the business," he said to himself. "If any man, outside a regular detective, can get a line on the Anderson robbers he can. It's something of an honor to work with him on so important a case. I don't blame him for not wanting a beginner like me to help him out, but maybe he'll find I'm some use after all. If I make good, Jackson is just the man to give me credit, and help me up a round in the ladder. This is the first real chance I've had with the paper, and it's up to me to do something. Anderson, who is next door to a millionaire, says that his wife's new diamond tiara, which cost him \$60,000, is among the jewelry lifted by the crooks, who entered his house early yesterday morning, blew open the wall safe and got away with loot estimated at \$100,000. He has offered a reward of \$20,000 for the arrest of the thieves and the recovery of his property. The police are hot after the reward, but if Jackson, with such help as I can give him, runs the rascals to cover and finds the plunder, he'll be entitled to the reward, and in that case the paper will secure a beat. Perhaps he'll give me a small rake-off."

An hour passed and nothing happened in which Tom was interested. Then he saw a man come to one of the windows of the house, and look around the neighborhood as well as he was able to do. That was the first sign of life he had seen at the house. The man disappeared and Tom looked for some developments, but none came. It was tiresome work, particularly wearying on his eyes, to keep up a constant watch through the hole in the disjointed curb; but it was business, and the boy did not complain at the unfruitfulness of his task. Another hour passed slowly away. He wondered if Jackson was having better luck. The fact that he had established himself where he could watch the front of the house indicated that the looked-for developments to come from that direction. The men to be shadowed might all have left the house by the front way at the time he had seen the man look out of the back window. In such a case his services were going to waste. However, he had his instructions and had to follow them. The third hour elapsed and evening was coming on. Tom had only had a light lunch, and not over-hearty breakfast, owing to his crippled finances, and his stomach began to bother him now.

"It seems to me that the people with the least money have the healthiest appetites," he said to himself. "I don't remember when I couldn't sit down to the table and hold my end up with anybody. Since my father and mother died, and I was thrown out on the world to hoe my own row, square meals have been getting

to be the exception with me. Well, what's the odds? Better rough it while you're young, and perhaps when you get old things will run smoother. Hello, there's that chap at the window again. He looks like the short, thick-set chap, with the striped vest, Jackson called my particular attention. The alleged crooks are presumed still in the house, and my time is not being wasted after all."

Dusk began creeping over the face of the bustling city. As it gradually became darker a lamplighter came up the street, on his zigzag course, and lit the street lamps. Lights had already appeared in the houses in the neighborhood. Not a gleam was to be seen in the house Tom was watching. It wore a dark and silent air, like a vacant house. There was a street lamp opposite the house next door on the left. Between the street and the house the young reporter was interested in was a vacant lot. But for that fact he would have been unable to keep tab on the house. A yard fence divided off the building in question from the lot. Entrance to the exit from the house was by way of the front, though the fence was no great obstacle to an active man who wished to take his departure that way.

Jackson had sent the cub reporter around to the rear to guard against such a possibility. For reasons of his own he suspected that when the men he had shadowed to the house, under the firm impression that they were connected with the great jewel robbery, left that one of them at any rate would take the rear route. He believed that the leader of the trio would come out of the front door, and he did not want to miss him. With an experienced assistant at the back his mind would have been easy, but he had no great confidence in Tom, because he was new and young, though personally he rather liked the boy as far as he knew him, which wasn't much. The street lamp next to the vacant lot enabled Tom to cover the width of the lot, and he kept his tired eyes glued in that direction. Suddenly a dark shadow emerged from the depths of the lot.

As he came within the scope of the rays of the lamp Tom saw it was the short, heavy-set chap, in the striped vest and soft crowned hat, he had been told about. In his hand was a small suitcase, and he started toward the nearest corner. Tom awoke to the necessity for immediate action.

CHAPTER II.—What Tom Hears On the Sloop.

The man, who had paused for a brief interval to look up and down the street, was already half way to the corner when Tom, getting out of his concealment, hurried after him, keeping close in the shadow of the houses on his side of the street. The boy's shoes being old, and the soles thin, made hardly any noise on the sidewalk, and he slipped after his quarry like a shadow. Reaching the corner, the man stopped and acted as if he was waiting for a car. Tom took advantage of his head being turned away to whisk around the corner and slip up the street a little way. A car came in sight and he saw

the man board it. Tom walked out to the track and jumped on the same car as it bowled along. The man with the suitcase was inside, at the far end of the car.

The young reporter remained outside on the platform. Through the rear window he could keep the fellow in sight without showing any interest in him. There were half a dozen passengers on board. Tom hadn't taken notice of the names on the car, showing what line it belonged to, so he didn't know where he was bound for. Even had he acquired that information he wouldn't have been much wiser. He was new to Rushville, and there was much connected with the town that he wasn't familiar with yet. It was situated on the south shore of a big lake, and was the junction point of two great railroad systems. It was one of the largest manufacturing cities of the middle West, and thousands of men, and women, too, plodded in its great factories. Its street car system ran in all directions, and the car Tom and the thick-set man were aboard of ran between the big Union Depot and the northern end of the lake.

It was now headed for the lake. It made no difference to Tom where it was going as long as it carried the man he had directions to shadow. The town thinned out in that direction, and the passengers dropped off one by one until no one was left inside but the man with the suitcase, who appeared to be half asleep in his corner. After the last of six passengers got off the car didn't stop again. The conductor went inside and sat down, as though he did not consider his presence necessary on the back platform. Tom was not surprised, for the houses along the route had dwindled down to a few, though they saw indications of building operations here and there. The landscape looked dark and lonesome, and would have had a dreary appearance but for the mass of lights stretching about in the rear. The sky was bright with stars, hidden at intervals by light clouds, and this light rendered objects around fairly visible.

The car bounded along at a rapid pace. Tom was looking off into the night toward a great shimmering space, but not a light was to be seen, and which marked the waters of the lake, when the car began slowing down with quick jolts. He looked inside and missed his man. Leaning out on one side of the platform, the side that people got off at, he saw a figure spring off. As the brakes were released and the car started to regain its speed, Tom made a quick spring over the gate at the other side of the platform and landed in a heap in some bushes. Picking himself up he saw the thick-set man making off toward the lake.

The car rapidly glided away to its terminal point only a short distance away. Tom started after his man, and found considerable difficulty in keeping track of him, for he had to use some caution lest the fellow should discover he was being followed. The route followed by the man was directly toward the lake but diagonally, in the same direction taken by the car. Tom immediately judged that he left the car as a blind. In this way a quarter of a mile was passed over and then Tom caught sight of the car standing still in front of a lighted building. The man

with the suitcase was now close to the lake shore and aiming for a wharf at which lay a large sloop. Tom fell behind a little, owing to the open space he had to cross and watched the man go out on the wharf and step aboard the sloop, where he was met by another man.

The young reporter got down on his hands and knees and crawled out alongside the string-piece. He went as far as he dared and watched the two men seated together in the standing room abaft the cabin. In a few minutes they entered the cabin, which was lighted and closed the door. Tom took advantage of his chance to crawl close up to the vessel. Not a soul was in sight. There was a hatch midway between the cabin and the bows, which the boy judged communicated with the hold. It was closed and covered with a piece of tarpaulin. Farther forward, close to the bows, was a small hatch, usually called a scuttle, which was open. Tom stepped lightly aboard the sloop, dropped on his hands and knees, and made his way cautiously aft to the skylight in the roof of the cabin.

A couple of small sections of it, on the side toward the lake, were open, and looking down into the room Tom saw the man he had followed and a roughly attired seafaring chap, seated at the small table directly under the skylight, hobnobbing over a bottle of liquor.

"I'm ready to put off for the other side of the lake the moment your friends arrive," said the sailor chap. "Isn't it about time they were here?"

"Pretty near. They were to follow me on the next car. The cars run under fifteen minute headway after six. It is possible they missed the following car and took the second one, which would make some difference in the time of their arrival. They'll get off at the cross road, same as I did, so that no one at the junction will see them. Although we are looking for no detectives over here, the sleuths are bound to come this way some time, and we don't care to give them a clew to follow," said the man who had brought the suitcase.

"Everybody is talking about the great diamond robbery. The papers are full of it, and lay it to the crooks who have been rather busy in town this spring," said the seafaring man. "The police have already arrested half a dozen on suspicion."

"Our safety lies in the fact that the police are on the wrong scent. Who would suspect that the old man's nephew was the moving spirit of the enterprise?"

"No one. He's a society gent of the first water. Is he short of money that he takes such desperate chances to raise it?"

"He's the treasurer of the Rushville Vacuum Tire Works, and he's been helping himself so freely to the funds of the company to keep up the pace he is leading that he's deeply involved—is over his head and shoulders. He needs close on to \$30,000 to square himself. A temporary drop in the company's business scared him, because the president told him that at the semi-annual meeting next month the board of directors would require a full statement of the company's financial standing. His books are all right, for he has them so cleverly doctored that

only an expert accountant could detect the cheat, and if he only had to show them, with his own statement, as he did at the last meeting, he'd be all right probably. This time he will be required to show how the company stands with the bank—the amount of cash on deposit, time notes, and so forth. The cash balance is all right. There are six of them that bear a forged signature of the president, and if that came out, it would place Mr. Horace Chiswell in a bad box. He'd be arrested at once and put through unless his wealthy uncle, Joseph Anderson, came to his rescue and made good. Even in that case he'd lose his fine job as treasurer of the company, and the probability is his uncle would cast him off and cut him out of his will. That would spell ruin to him."

"And to save himself all this unpleasant trouble he got up this diamond robbery, hoping to make enough out of it to save his bacon?"

"Exactly, and provide him with enough extra cash to last him for a while."

"Couldn't he have robbed the safe himself without calling on you and Frisbie to help him do it?"

"He sure could, for he knew where his uncle kept the combination and the key of the inner steel door; but that wouldn't have done at all."

"You mean it would have drawn suspicion upon him?"

"Not necessarily; but he wanted to give the matter the appearance of a regular burglary. So many houses and safes have been looted in Rushville within the last three months by an organized gang, which has defied the police with success, that it struck him the robbery of the safe would at once be laid to the same bunch."

"A clever idea."

"Yes. Then the safe disposition of the plunder was an even more important consideration. One hundred thousand dollars worth of diamonds, particularly when one piece, the tiara of Mrs. Anderson, is worth \$60,000 alone, cannot be easily turned into cash within the short time he requires the money."

"How is it going to be managed?"

"Leave that to Jim Frisbie and me. On our way across the lake and up the river we'll remove every diamond from the tiara, and all the stones from the other bits of jewelry. That will destroy their identity. Then we'll put the settings in the melting pot and reduce them to a mass of unrecognizable metal. This will be subsequently refined and sold for its weight in gold. The diamonds and other stones will be disposed of as unset gems in Chicago—that is, enough of them to provide Chiswell with the funds he has to have at once. The rest will go to New York and be got rid of there among certain jewelers who are not squeamish when they can drive a fair bargain. None of the plunder will ever pass through the channels usually used by crooks, and therefore all the efforts of the police to track it will be in vain."

"I hope the thing goes through without a hitch for I don't want to get into trouble over it," said the sailor man, whose name was Ben Bunker, and who was the owner of the sloop.

"Don't worry, Bunker. You're not supposed to know anything about the matter. You and

your sloop have been hired to take a party out fishing on the lake. If you're told to go up the river it's all the same to you as long as you're paid for the time you're out. You will get double rates, and something more to boot, but that's between you and me. We're old pals, you know, and you can depend on me seeing to it that you get a good thing out of the job."

"I suppose you and Frisbie will pull Chiswell's leg for a good sum?"

"That's already agreed on. We are to get \$10,000 apiece."

"How much do you think I will get?"

"Twenty dollars a day while you're out, and a bonus of \$500."

"When do I get it?"

"The \$20 a day you'll get as soon as we part company with you. The bonus say in a month—as soon as Frisbie and me are ready to make a final settlement with Chiswell."

"You and Frisbie are going to get rid of the diamonds, then?"

"Yes; that's part of our work."

"Chiswell must have a good deal of confidence in you."

"He has, and we'll treat him white. In the long run it will mean money in our pocket. We'll never need a dollar as long as he lives," grinned the speaker, who was known to Bunker as Bud Whipple, an ex-crook, but now employed by the Rushville Vacuum Tire Works as special office messenger.

Jim Frisbie was also an ex-crook, a former pal of Whipple's. Whipple had procured him the position of office porter with the company. At that moment, Tom, the reporter, who was deeply interested in the revelation he was listening to, the disclosure of which imprint he knew would create a sensation in Rushville, and give his paper a beat on the great diamond robbery, heard sounds on the wharf. He glanced over the top of the skylight and saw two men approaching the sloop. They were already so close to the vessel that the boy couldn't leave his place of partial concealment without his presence being detected, so he bobbed down again and lay quiet. The newcomers stepped aboard, each carrying a small suitcase. The one in the lead had the air of a gentleman though his appearance was a bit rough. He was dressed in a pilot coat with a soft dark hat pulled down above his eyes, while a heavy short beard fringed his jaw from ear to ear. This man was Horace Chiswell in disguise. He pounded on the cabin door. Whipple sprang from his seat, pulled the bolt and opened the door.

"You two have come at last," he said. "Then we'll be off at once. This is Bunker, the owner of the vessel, and he will take us wherever we want to go. I will guarantee that he can be depended on."

"And his helper?"

"He will have none on this trip. Jim and me know enough about boats to give him all the lift he wants."

"I thought I saw the legs of a man stretched out alongside of the skylight, as though asleep. I suppose he was one of the crew."

"The dickens!" ejaculated Whipple, with a look

of consternation. "I hope you were mistaken. I'll have to investigate."

The cub reporter heard what he said and realized that he must effect a rapid change of pose if he hoped to avoid discovery.

CHAPTER III.—Caught.

He was not quick enough to escape the notice of Whipple and Frisbie, who ran out of the cabin, both of them alive to the possibility that the legs mentioned by Chiswell belonged to a detective, who must be summarily dealt with, or the game was up accordingly to the prearranged programme. Tom was gliding forward toward the open scuttle when the two men saw him. Had he darted for the wharf he could have made his escape in the darkness, but he felt that it was his duty to stick to the hot scent he had hit.

"Hey, you, what are you doing aboard this sloop?" demanded Whipple, springing up on the deck, followed by Frisbie, and rushing after him. Tom stopped and turned around, feeling he was up against it, and wondering what excuse he could offer.

"Looking for something to eat," he replied, his stomach suggesting that reply.

"Looking for something to eat?" repeated Whipple, grabbing him by the arm roughly. "That will do to tell. Come now, give an account of yourself. Who are you?"

"Tom Jones, eh? What brought you snooping around this vessel?"

"I've told you. I'm hungry. I haven't had anything but a sandwich and a cup of coffee since breakfast, and then I only had coffee and two rolls."

Tom was telling the exact truth. It was going on nine o'clock and he was desperately hungry. His words had the ring of truth, and the hungry look in his countenance bore him out. Still Whipple was not satisfied.

"You were lying down alongside the skylight listening to what was going on in the cabin. Don't try to deny it, for you were seen there. That isn't the way to look for something to eat. Come now, own up that you're a spy."

"I know I was lying beside the skylight. I guess I must have fallen asleep there. If you'll give me something to eat I'll go away."

"No, I don't think you'll go away yet awhile. As for giving you something to eat, what do you take this vessel for—a restaurant?"

"But I'm awfully hungry, truly I am. If you'll give me a feed I'm willing to pay for it in work, if you have anything you want done."

Chiswell and Bunker now came up.

"Is he a——" began Chiswell, when he was choked off by Whipple.

"I don't know what he is, but he has no business aboard the craft. He claims he's hungry, but that's all poppycock in my opinion," said Whipple.

"If your stomach felt like mine you couldn't call it poppy-cock," said Tom.

"Better search him," suggested Frisbie.

Whipple acted on the suggestion at once.

Shoving his hand into Tom's side pocket he pulled out a reporter's notebook and a pencil. Tom had filled a couple of pages with notes concerning the facts he had overheard through the open skylight. They were in shorthand and clumsily executed, for they had been written in the dark by starlight.

"Got a match, Frisbie?" asked Whipple.

"Yes."

"Strike it."

The match flared up and Whipple examined the lines and potbooks in the book, which covered a score of pages, and besides Tom's night's work consisted of notes taken during previous assignments.

"Shorthand!" ejaculated Whipple. "This chap is evidently a spy."

"Those are my notes. I'm learning shorthand," said Tom.

Under different circumstances his words might have had some effect, for the potbooks he had slapped down beside the skylight were pretty raw, and far from the performance of even an ordinary stenographer. Whipple was no judge of shorthand from an expert point of view. As long as it was shorthand it was sufficiently suspicious to criminate the young skulker. The rascal believed Tom was an ally of the police. He looked too young to be a regular detective, but the man knew that regular sleuths often employed assistants not on the force to help them out. He judged that Tom was one. Whether he was or not they could not afford to let him get away. Whipple shoved the notebook in his pocket and continued his search. He found a quarter in Tom's vest pocket.

"Hungry, are you, with a quarter in your pocket, and a free lunch to be had for a drink at the saloon yonder!" he said, grimly. "I thought you were lying and now I know it."

"I'm not lying. I'm as hungry as thunder," insisted Tom, with a ravenous look. "I wanted to save that quarter to pay for a bed."

"We'll give you a bed free. Here, Bunker, get a rope and tie this chap's arms. We've got to take him with us, and the hold is the only place where we can put him."

"I don't care where you put me if you'll give me something to eat," said Tom.

"You ought to starve for putting your nose where it isn't wanted. If you're really hungry you'll stay so, and serve you right."

Tom had nothing more to say. He saw that it would do him no good. So he gritted his teeth and made up his mind to grin and bear it. Bunker brought the rope and tied the boy's arms behind his back. He accomplished the job by taking two turns of the rope around Tom's body and tying a knot behind. The tarpaulin was pulled off the hatch, the hatch lifted and the boy was put down into the dark and fish-smelling hold. The hatch was then replaced.

"I'm afraid he's in the employ of the police," said Whipple. "We must make sure of it for it's a serious matter."

"And if we find he is, what then?" said Chiswell.

"He'll have to be kept out of the way, or bought off."

"If a whisper of my connection with this affair got out I'd be ruined," said Chiswell.

"You certainly would," agreed Whipple. "And the rest of us would have to get under cover and stay there. One thing is certain he must be kept under close watch till the job is wound up according to programme. Then we'll see what can be done with him. It would pay us, you particularly, to give him two or three thousand to close his mouth, and it would pay him to accept. He couldn't make money any easier. Two or three thousand would be a fortune to him. Well, it is time we got under way. Come on, Bunker, Jam and I'll lend you a hand."

The mainsail was hoisted part way, the jibs ditto, the lines cast off and the sloop slowly left her moorings and slipped out into the lake. Just as she was disappearing in the gloom of the night a well built young man came gliding out on the wharf.

"Too late!" he muttered. "Hang the luck!"

This individual was Jackson, the Planet's star reporter. And for the twelfth time he swore at the stupidity of City Editor Brown for sending him a raw cub reporter instead of an experienced man. If he had only dreamed that the cub reporter was aboard the disappearing sloop and had acquired information which he hardly even suspected, his thoughts would have been different. Left to himself in the darkness of the small hold, with his arms bound, Tom was not particularly to be envied, particularly as he was tortured by an empty stomach. While he was considering his position the sloop got under way. Tom wondered if there was anything in the hold besides himself.

The smell of stale fish that predominated arose from the fact that the vessel had carried a load of salt fish across the lake from Rushville a few days previous. The fish were boxed, but for all that the odor emanating from the cases remained behind as a gentle remainder of the nature of the cargo. As it is not a pleasant thing to be in the dark with one's arms confined by a rope Tom started in to see if he couldn't free himself. He found the job easier than he anticipated. Bunker had failed to tie him as tight as might have done, and so Tom, by some manipulation of his hands, got his right arm partly free. This enabled him to shove his hand into his pocket where his clasp knife was.

To pass it behind his back and open the big blade with the fingers of his other hand was not such a difficult operation. The knife being sharp he soon severed the rope and the rest was easy. Freeing himself of the line he pulled out a match and lit it. Looking around he saw that the only things in the hold were a number of boxes and a hamper. The hamper suggested provisions. Such a suggestion in the famished state Tom was in induced him to eagerly investigate the contents of the hamper. He found half a dozen loaves of fresh bread to begin with and half a cooked ham, such as is to be found in delicatessen stores. Tom did not look further. He seized a loaf with his knife and cut off several slices. Then he struck another match and began slicing the ham. In a trice he had two sandwiches prepared, his mouth watering during the proceeding. Laying down his knife he

began to eat with an avidity that almost choked him.

"Mercy, how good it tastes!" he thought, as he chewed away.

Those two sandwiches disappeared in no time, and he fixed up a third, which followed the same road.

"If I only had something to drink now," he thought.

He made further examination of the hamper and discovered a quart bottle of milk. He drank half of it before his thirst was appeased. Then he got busy with a fourth sandwich, and between that and a fifth he finished the milk.

"Gosh! I feel bang-up now," he told himself.

Then he sat down and reflected on what he had overheard. The loss of his notebook meant little to him, for he recalled every important particular of the conversations he had overheard. Tom was too recent an addition to the population of Rushville to know much about the town and its inhabitants. Joseph Anderson, the rich manufacturer whose house had been robbed of a fortune in diamonds and other jewelry, was one of the leading citizens and consequently well known to the newspaper men. Tom might have seen his name mentioned in the papers, but took no notice of it until the diamond robbery brought it into prominence.

Horace Chiswell was a leader in swell society and a man about town. Every newspaper man knew him by sight or in some way. Otis Cobb boasted of being on terms of intimacy with him. Tom had heard his name referred to so often by the other reporters, and had also seen it in print in connection with the first night of a new show, a cotillion dance, a reception given by one of Rushville's 400, or in other way, that he had come to regard Horace Chiswell as a very important and fortunate person. As he was a bachelor, and was believed to stand high in his wealthy uncle's favor, he was much angled for by ambitious mothers who were anxious to unload a marriageable daughter upon him.

Having all this in his mind's eye, the revelation that came to Tom's ears through the cabin skylight quite staggered the young reporter. Apparently Horace Chiswell was not what fancy painted him. High rolling habits had run him into debt. To secure the wherewith to hold his end up he had forged the name of the president of his company to several notes, aggregating \$30,000, and had discounted them at the company's bank, which his position as treasurer enabled him to do. And now, with the certainty of exposure dogging his steps, he had gone more deeply into crime, in order to save himself. And this crime was a pretty mean one.

He had robbed his uncle and aunt of their most cherished possessions, expecting that the blame would fall on the crooks that infested the city, and while the police was following a false scent he planned to turn his plunder into cash, with the assistance of his two experienced confederates. Tom went over all this as he sat there in the dark hold and reflected that he alone probably was aware of the truth. What a story he would have to turn into the Planet office. It was something a cub reporter might well be proud of. Perhaps on the strength of it he would

become a regular, young as he was. And then he would get work enough to pay his way, and the nightmare of a lodging-house misses pounding impatiently on his hall room door for her rent, and the substantial breakfast of coffee and rolls, not to speak of a meager supper of hash, would become phantasies of the past. All this improved condition of things he pictured to himself as the result of the beat he felt he had secured for his paper.

His castle building, however, tumbled when he got down to the hard fact that two important things had to be done before he realized on his advantage. He must escape from his captors, and he must be able to substantiate his story. His mere statement alone of what he had learned concerning the truth of the diamond robbery, while it might be credited by the editor of his paper could not be printed without reasonable evidence to back it up. The most important thing expected of a reporter is truthfulness, and in the ordinary run of the newspaper game, owing to the rush with which the paper is gotten out, which prevents, as a rule, verification, it is taken for granted. Should a reporter fail in this essential particular he is discharged in short order, and the brand is apt to spoil his career.

For that reason reports, for their own interests, are careful to stick to the facts—for it is facts that the newspapers want and print. Tom, though merely a cub reporter, came under the same iron-clad rule, but while his story might be accepted at its value in the office, it was of too serious a nature to be printed offhand. Experienced reporters would be sent to investigate along the lines furnished by himself, and doubtless they'd pick up enough evidence to warrant publication. Of course he would receive due credit for his part in the ultimate story, but Tom figured that half the glory would be lost to him. So he resolved at all hazards to run his quarry down and get his own story into the paper. Then he would know that he had made good on his first real attempt.

Tom noticed a small crevice in the bulkhead.

He applied his eye to it and saw Chiswell, Whipple and Frisbee sitting around a table. On the table lay a glittering mass of diamond jewelry, with Mrs. Anderson's tiara in the center. The men were talking, but Tom could not distinguish the words. Just then Bunker came into the cabin for orders. "Go straight on. Anything on the lake?" asked Whipple.

"Nothing."

Chiswell then went out on deck.

The others set about taking the jewels from their settings, when Chiswell poked his head in the door and reported a fast launch coming up.

Whipple told Frisbee to put the tools in a locker, put the tiara into the suitcase and bring it on deck.

Tom resolved to make his escape if he could. So he darted to the hatch, which Whipple had left open; he caught the combing and swung himself on deck. As Tom reached the bow the craft fetched up against the shore bank with a shock which sent him flying ashore. Whipple grabbed the suitcase and sprang ashore, followed by Frisbee.

Tom had been seen by the two crooks and they

were now afraid of his bringing the police down on them. They had scarcely been able to escape before the police launch ran up to the sloop. The vessel was searched by the officers, but nothing was discovered of a suspicious character. They saw Chiswell, but did not suspect him.

Meanwhile Whipple and Frisbie had headed up the river bank followed by the young reporter. After going about half a mile Whipple and Frisbie waited for the sloop, which was, Tom thought, to meet them there. Whipple set the suitcase beside a thick patch of bushes. Then he walked over to the river bank. Frisbie waited for him to come back. Tom, who was behind the bushes, put his arm through and pulled the suitcase to him, making off with it without being discovered. When the crooks came back for the suitcase it had disappeared.

"The boy has followed us and taken it," said Whipple.

The sloop came up to the bank just then and was made fast. Chiswell was in the cabin asleep.

Whipple now acquainted Bunker with the loss of the suitcase and his suspicions as to who took it. The three men immediately set out to find Tom.

By this time Tom was well away with his suitcase. Entering an old farmyard he stopped beside a well to get a drink when his feet suddenly shot through a hole in the ground and he brought up at the bottom of the well with the suitcase beside him. It happened by luck, to be a dry well. He was not injured as far as he could learn. While waiting for daylight Tom fell asleep. When he awoke up it was daylight and Tom perceived a sort of tunnel leading from one side of the well. Leaving his suitcase behind him he followed the tunnel and came out in a dense mass of bushes. He did not observe three men seated on the ground close by. They saw him, however, and knew him at once. They rushed over to him. "So we have caught you at last," cried Whipple, as he seized the reporter. "What have you done with the suitcase?"

Tom was made a prisoner in the meantime.

CHAPTER IV.—Back to the Sloop.

"I say, what have you done with that suitcase?" repeated Whipple.

"What suit-case?" replied Tom, recovering from his surprise, and having no intention of revealing the whereabouts of the article in question.

"None of that. No bluffs. We want to know where it is, and, what's more, we're going to find out," said Whipple, sharply.

"Will you explain what suit-case you're talking about? I haven't any suit-case about me," said Tom.

"We see you haven't. You've hid it in the wood there. Show us where."

"No, I haven't hid it in the wood. I haven't got it."

"That won't do. We know you have it."

"Then you know a whole lot more than I do myself."

"Own up, now, that you're working for the Rushville police."

"I am not working for the Rushville police. I don't know a single officer. In fact, I'm almost a stranger in the city. I wasn't there three weeks when you made a prisoner of me last night and brought me over here, where I've been trying ever since I got away from you last night to find my way out of this confounded wilderness."

"Your yarn may be true in some respects, but we know you got away with the suit-case last night in the dark," said Whipple. "You think there's something in it worth while stealing, that's why you are keeping it in the background. Now if you're hard up, and feel the need of stealing a suitcase to replenish your resources, we'll give you a \$5 bill and let you go if you give up the case."

"I'd like to make your \$5 bill, for I need the money, but I can't give up what I haven't got," said Tom.

The boy's persistency in denying any knowledge of the suit-case forced the rascals into a corner. It even gave rise to some doubts in their minds, particularly in Bunker's, as to whether they hadn't made a mistake in the matter after all. It was not impossible that in the darkness and excitement of the occasion Whipple and Frisbie had overlooked the suitcase, and if they returned to the spot, and made a careful search, they would find it. Bunker offered the suggestion. Whipple was sure that he couldn't have overlooked it. He remember just where he had laid it down, close to the bushes, while he went over to the bank to hail the sloop. When he returned in less than five minutes the suit-case was not there.

"Anyway, Jim and me looked all around the spot, and we couldn't have failed to see it if it was there," said Whipple.

"Well, if the boy knows where it is he won't tell," said Bunker.

"We must make him tell."

"I am ready to take a hand in the operation if you will offer a suggestion."

"If he won't own up we'll have to take him back to the sloop. We can't do anything with him here. There's a farmhouse yonder, and we don't want to attract special attention. Besides, I'm blamed hungry. We've had no breakfast yet, and it's close on to noon," said Frisbie.

"The sloop is only about two miles back," said Bunker. "If we can get the truth out of the boy on the sloop it won't take so long for a couple of us to return here, if the suit-case is hidden in the wood."

So the party started back along the route they had followed the night before, and Tom had to go along. He didn't mind it so much. He was satisfied the stolen diamonds were in a safe place and that they could be recovered at any time. There was no danger now of the gems being detached from their settings. It might take time, but in the end Mrs. Anderson would get her tiara and other jewelry back intact. The cub reporter felt that he had effectually blocked Horace Chiswell's game to raise the money he needed to save himself from exposure and ruin.

When they finally reached the boat there was

an explosion of fireworks, so to speak, from Mr. Chiswell. He had been walking the sloop's deck, smoking cigars and drinking whisky since he woke up and turned out at nine o'clock, three hours before, and found himself the only occupant of the vessel, much to his surprise and somewhat to his displeasure. Being ignorant of the cause of the absence of the three men, he fumed over it with the impatience of a man of his social standing accustomed to have things his way. As time passed a suspicion began to take shape in his mind that his confederates had played him false and made off with the diamonds, leaving him in the lurch.

"Where in thunder have you people been?" he roared, angrily, as they stepped on board with their prisoner, "and who have you got with you?"

The relief he felt at seeing his confederates back enabled him to give rein to his displeasure at having been deserted.

"We've been off on an important expedition," said Whipple.

"'Portant expedition! (hic) What do you mean by that? What right have you to go away and leave me alone? Why is the sloop tied up here along the river instead of being tied up at a wharf in Glendale? Do you know you have caused me to miss the morning express for Chicago? Do you know you have caused me to miss my breakfast, too? I want an explanation—an explanation!" (hic)

"Certainly, sir. You know our prisoner escaped from us last night and it was necessary for the good of all concerned that he be recaptured," said Whipple.

"What prisoner?" said Mr. Chiswell, who had forgotten about Tom, and did not remember anything concerning him.

"This boy, suspected of being a spy in the service of the police."

Chiswell looked hard at Tom.

"Boy," he hiccupped, "are you a police spy?"

"No, sir," answered Tom.

"Whipple, you hear that? Boy says he isn't a police spy. How do you (hic) make out that he is?"

"I am surprised that you seem to have forgotten what happened last night at the wharf before we sailed, sir. You yourself were the person who detected him in the act of listening at the cabin skylight."

"Look here, Whipple, am I drunk?" said the treasurer of the tire works.

"You are not sober," replied Whipple, frankly. He was disgusted with the attitude and condition of his employer.

"You have reason to believe that the boy is a spy, eh?"

"I have."

"What for? What does he know? Who is he?"

"I can't answer any of your questions, sir."

"What's your name, boy?"

"Tom Jones," replied the young reporter.

"Where do you live?"

"Rushville."

"What are you doing out here?"

"You people brought me here on these sloop."

"If you hadn't been nosing around the sloop we wouldn't have brought you," said Whipple.

"You have been talking a great deal about

me nosing around this vessel, and you have repeatedly charged me with being connected with the police. Why have you done so? What's going on aboard this sloop that you are afraid of leaking out?"

"Nothing is going on that we're afraid of leaking out," replied Whipple, with a scowl.

"Then what difference did it make to you if I was nosing around, or if I was connected with the police, which, however, isn't the fact?"

"The difference is we don't want strangers hanging around."

"Let me go, then, and I'll get away fast enough."

"We'll let you go when you've confessed what you have done with that suit-case," said Whipple.

"What suit-case are you talking about, Whipple?" blinked Chiswell.

"One of our suit-cases is missing and we suspect he took it."

"Boy is a thief, then?"

"Never mind what he is. You'd better turn in and sleep off the whisky you've been drinking. Bunker will start in and cook breakfast, or rather dinner, and we'll call you when it's ready."

Whipple's object was to get Chiswell out of the way below. The gentleman didn't want to go below. He was up for the day and intended to stay up. Tom noticed one thing in connection with him—that was he had no beard on this morning. The boy for the first time saw Chiswell's natural face. Whipple took Frisbie aside and whispered something in a low tone to him. Then he took Chiswell by the arm and told him to come below, as he wanted to talk to him. Chiswell was willing to go into the cabin to talk business, and Whipple got him there.

"Now, young fellow, either own up about the suitcase or you'll have to take another spell of it in the hold, and this time, I think, we'll fix you so that you won't be able to go free," said Frisbee.

"I've told you I haven't got the suit-case."

"But you know where it is hidden."

Of course Tom did, and he didn't care to lie about it, he kept silent.

"Your silence convicts you."

"I've said all I'm going to about that suit-case."

"You refuse to give me a definite answer?"

"I refuse to give you any answer at all."

"Very well. Down into the hold you go."

Once more Bunker put a rope around Tom's arms and body, and this time it was noosed. The nose was drawn fairly tight and knotted. Thus he was put into the hold and tied up to the mast. But the hatch was left partly off to give him air and light.

CHAPTER V.—Tom Refuses To Give In.

Tom wondered what would be the end of this second experience in the hold. He did not believe his captors would gain much by it. Certainly they wouldn't learn from him the hiding place of the diamonds. Through the forward bulkhead he heard Bunker busy in the little galley. There was a door in the bulkhead through which the boatman came into the hold

with a lighted candle. He held it over the hamper and saw that it had been tampered with.

"So, you young rascal, you've helped yourself to some of our provisions, I see," he said, angrily.

"I told you people I was awfully hungry last night," replied Tom? I didn't rob you of much—a few slices of bread and ham and a bottle of milk. The milk probably would have been sour by this time, and useless to you, anyway, if I hadn't drank it."

Bunker saw that the boy hadn't taken so much, and as for the milk, he guessed it would have been unfit to use by that time. He let the matter go at that and carried away some of the things in the hamper. Then he returned and opened a box lined with zinc which contained meat packed in small chunks of ice. Out of another box he took some potatoes. He sat down and peeled a dozen of them.

"Feel hungry again?" he grinned at the prisoner.

"I do. Are you going to give me a bite when you chaps get through?" asked Tom.

"If you tell us where the suitcase is we will, otherwise you'll go hungry," said Bunker.

"That suit-case must be awfully important from the way you people harp about it."

"It's important enough for us to want to get it back. I guess if you had a suit-case filled with your personal property stolen you'd try hard to get it back again. Wouldn't you?"

"Of course I would."

"Very good, that's why we are digging at you to give that case up."

"I can't give up what I haven't got."

"But you stole it from us and have hidden it so as to go through it as soon as you get the chance."

"Say, you chaps came upon me unawares on the edge of the woods."

"If we hadn't we would have nabbed you."

"You may gamble on that, for you'd win. I had no wish to run across you again after the way you treated me. Now, look here, you didn't find that suit-case in my hand, did you?"

"You hid it in the woods before you came out."

"Why should I have done that when I wasn't expecting to meet you people? I'd have had it with me if it was in my possession."

The apparent logic of Tom's remark caused Bunker to scratch his head. His mind couldn't suggest any reason why the boy, if he had the suit-case, should have hidden it in the wood if he did not expect to meet his late captors.

"Well, I don't know much about the matter," he said. "Bud Whipple says he knows you are the only one who could have taken it, and Jim Frisbie agrees with him. Whipple is running things and what he says goes with me, because he's the chap I look to for the hire of the boat. If you didn't take it, of course you didn't, but it's such an important matter that you won't get out of this scrap very easy, I can tell you that."

Bunker was rather incautious in his remarks, for he let out the full names of Whipple and Frisbie, and the young reporter made a mental note of them.

"What do you do for a living? Take parties out on this sloop?"

"Yes, and sometimes I go fishing on my own hook."

"What do you do in cold weather?"

"Nothing much. Pick up odd jobs here and there ashore."

"You furnish the meals when you take parties out, I suppose?"

"The people furnish the grub and I cook it."

Bunker got up and carried his potatoes into the galley. Presently there came a sizzling sound, and a smell that made Tom's mouth water. He was a hungry boy, and Bunker's intimation that he would not get anything to eat unless he told about the suit-case was not a pleasant reflection to him. Bunker didn't return to the hold. The appetizing odor of beefsteak done to a turn floated to Tom's nose and made him still more ravenous for food. He hadn't lived very high since he came to Rushville, but still he had not actually gone hungry. Even a cup of coffee and a plate of doughnuts will stay the stomach when one cannot afford to buy steak and fried potatoes. Tom would have given a great deal for that meager lay-out now, but he was afraid that the smell of well-cooked victuals was all he could hope for under the present strenuous circumstances.

While Bunker was acting as cook, Frisbie was laying the table in the cabin. Whipple and Chiswell were seated in the stand-room outside talking. The former had not as yet dared confess to his principal that the diamonds had vanished. He knew such a communication would produce an awful eruption. He hoped it wouldn't come to that point, and yet, rack his brains as he might, he could think of no plan that would make their prisoner confess unless starvation would do it, and that would take more time than he could afford to give to it, if the boy had the pluck to stand out to the limit. Bunker finished his cooking and, assisted by Frisbie, carried the dishes into the cabin and placed them on the table. The board was set only for three, as Bunker was expected to eat in the galley, or on deck, for Mr. Chiswell wouldn't stand for him at the same table with himself.

It was only the necessity of the occasion that made the society leader and treasurer consent to eat with his accomplices. As a matter of fact, when Chiswell employed them to help him commit the crime on his uncle, he practically lowered himself to their level. They were wise enough not to seek to press such an advantage, at least at that stage of the game. They knew what kind of man they had to deal with, and they did not consider it prudent to act toward Chiswell with any more familiarity than the circumstances called for. Between themselves Whipple and Frisbie counted Chiswell as the goose that might be counted on to lay many golden eggs in the future, when they needed those kinds of eggs, for companionship in crime gave them a hold upon him which he forgot to figure on when he went into the enterprise. Chiswell and his two associates went into the cabin and ate like the hungry men they were, while Bunker lost no time in getting outside of his own meal in the galley. Tom knew that all hands were enjoying their dinner, and his stomach felt emptier than ever. He tried to free

himself, but with no success. Bunker had tied him in good shape this time. Half an hour elapsed and then Whipple came to the galley.

There was enough food for one person left over. Whipple had it fixed up temptingly on a tray by Bunker, and, flanked by a hot cup of coffee, he entered the hold with it.

"I guess you're hungry, kid," he said, holding the tray under the boy's nose. "This is your dinner, but there's a string attached to it. You must tell where the suit-case is. If you do that you eat, if you won't do it it you don't eat. What's your answer?"

"I don't eat, I suppose," replied Tom.

Whipple looked disappointed.

"Better think it over. We're going to unmoor and go on up the river. You won't get a thing to eat, if you drop down, till you give in."

"I'm in your power and will have to stand for anything you do to me," said the cub reporter. "Instead of harassing me, why don't you go ashore and take another look for the suitcase?"

"Because it would only be a waste of time. Now look here, young man, we have got to have that case. We know you have a line on its present whereabouts. What you expect to make out of it I don't know, but it contains property I don't want to lose. We might take you to Glendale and hand you over to the police on the charge of theft. Sooner than go to all that trouble, I'll give you \$100 if you'll lead us to the hiding-place of the case, and then we'll let you go your way."

"If you offered me \$1,000 I couldn't do as you want."

"Why couldn't you?"

"For the reason I have already stated."

"You persist in denying that you know where it is?"

"I have nothing further to say about it."

Whipple carried the tray of food back to the galley.

"No go, eh?" asked Bunker.

"Even \$100 won't tempt him. I don't know what to make out of him. He's put up in a bad box. The boss has ordered me to proceed to Glendale, and I don't know how to get out of it. I hate to leave this neighborhood, for the suit-case is somewhere around. Suppose he should ask to see the diamonds before he starts for Chicago, what am I going to do? The truth will have to come out then; and there'll be the dickens to pay."

"We'd better go on to Glendale, land Chiswell, and come back here after he's started for Chicago."

"We'll have to keep the boy well under cover while we're at the town."

"That can be done by keeping the hatch on and the tarpaulin cloth over it."

"He won't smother?"

"There's air enough for a day or two in the hold, but as we don't want to make him suffer we can leave the scuttle partly open and the door in the bulkhead ajar. Then he'll be all right."

Fifteen minutes later the sloop was unmoored and resumed her way up the river under a light breeze. The fact that the craft was under way

didn't worry Tom greatly. The only thing that worried him was his stomach. Bunker came in to see him.

"Why don't you buy yourself off?" he asked. "A \$100 and a nice meal—I'll warm it up for you—isn't to be sneezed at," he said.

"I'm tired of your argument. Let me alone," replied Tom.

"Losing your temper, are you. You're either a fool, or——"

"I'm not half the fool you people are. If you do me up you'll have to answer for it. If you don't fed me I'm bound to go under. That won't bring you the suit-case any sooner. I tell you right now. Sink or swim, that you'll never find it out through me. That's my last word on the subject, and you can carry it to the man higher up," said Tom, desperately.

Bunker looked at him, shook his head and went on deck, where he communicated the brief interview to Whipple. That worthy ripped out an imprecation and returned to his seat astern where Frisbie was steering, a feat that required no particular ability in that breeze.

Toot—toot—toot!

Up the river came a swift launch, whirling suddenly into sight around a bend. Those aboard the sloop were not a little startled.

CHAPTER VI.—Free Again.

A guilty conscience always fears the worst, that's why Chiswell and his two confederates jumped to the conclusion that the launch was a police boat. A visit from the police boat now was sure to lead to unpleasant explanations, for they would find a half starved prisoner on board, who might let out information that would cause their arrest. If he knew where the suitcase containing the stolen diamonds was, as Whipple and Frisbie were confident he did, he would lead the authorities to it and then claim the \$20,000 reward. Up to that moment Whipple had forgotten the reward, and he now understood, or thought he did, the real reason of the prisoner's dogged conduct. On came the launch, dashing the water from her bows. Whipple and Frisbie held their breath, and Chiswell looked worried, for he was fairly sober now, his dinner having drawn the fumes of the whisky from his head.

The launch came up hand-over-hand. Instead of the police, it contained a bunch of young men, and those aboard the sloop drew a free breath of relief.

"Hi, there, get a gait on, you ice wagon!" shouted one of the young men, standing up in the stern and looking toward the sloop. Chiswell recognized the speaker as Otis Cobb.

Ordinarily he would hardly have noticed the young man, though they were on speaking terms, but now he waved his hands and shouted: "Hello, Cobb."

Cobb stared and then recognized Chiswell.

"Run alongside the sloop and stop," he said to the man forward who was running the boat.

Power was shut off and the engine reversed when it was seen that the launch would shoot by the slow-going craft.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Chiswell," said Cobb, doffing his hat politely. "Didn't expect to meet you up this way."

"Where are you going in that launch?" asked the society man.

"To Glendale to report a college baseball game for my paper," said Cobb, consequentially: "You know I'm a sporting writer on the Planet."

If Chiswell knew it his memory was at fault. Anyway, the fact didn't interest him. Neither did Otis Cobb. Cobb had got the assignment through the city editor, who wishing to oblige Mr. Cobb, Sr., had asked the sporting editor to give the young man another chance to spread himself. As the sporting editor did not regard the game in question as particularly important, he consented to send Cobb to do the game. He was provided with his railroad fare and a badge, but Cobb decided to go in what he considered style and take a couple of friends with him, so he hired the launch at his own expense, for money was no great object to him, and started across the lake at a hot clip, and thence up the river.

"I'm going fishing over at Clear Lake, and I may wind up in Chicago," replied Chiswell.

After a short conversation the launch started on again, as Cobb said he had no time to lose, for the game started at half-past three.

"How lucky that wasn't a police launch!" said Whipple.

"That's right," nodded Frisbie. "With the prisoner on board, had we been boarded by officers we would have been up against it."

An hour wore slowly away and Tom began to grow weak. His legs trembled under him, his face looked drawn, and he leaned heavily on the ropes that held him. Bunker, making another visit, reported his condition to Whipple. That individual visited him.

"Ready to give in?" he asked.

"I've nothing to say," replied the boy, gamely.

"Loosen the rope and let him sit down," said Whipple.

As Bunker loosened up his bonds, Tom slid to the floor and fell over, looking white and exhausted.

"Feed him," said Whipple. "We must try some other method with him."

He returned to the standing-room and had a private talk with Frisbie. Bunker warmed the coffee and the rest of the food and brought it to Tom. The boy accepted it and ate ravenously. Then he sat back against the mast and closed his eyes. After releasing his arms so he could eat, Bunker had tied him not over tight to the mast in his sitting posture. He intended to tie his arms again later, when he looked better.

He forgot or neglected carrying this purpose out. The knot had held Tom's bonds was a peculiar sailor one not easy to untie when it's behind one. Maybe Bunker counted on that knot to do it's full duty. We will give the knot the credit of being able to do its full duty. Tom couldn't have untied it if he had tried. He didn't try when later on, realizing that his hands were free, he decided to make his escape if he could. Why should he go to all that trouble when he had a knife in his pocket—the knife which had freed him before? Tom reached his

resolution about the time the sloop was drawing into a small wharf at Glendale at about four o'clock. He felt fully recovered now, the meal having put fresh vigor into him. No one had come near him since he was fed, and that was over an hour since.

It was lucky that he started to get away at that moment, for Whipple was about to order the hatch closed upon him now that the sloop was presently to be tied up to the wharf. Tom, however, didn't know they were so near Glendale. He expected to jump into the river, swim ashore and dig out as fast as he could travel. He whipped out his knife and cut himself free. Then he tried to get out through the galley, but could not find the door. It was not dark in the hold with the hatch half off, but still the door was not visible to him. The hinges were not exposed and the handle was on the other side. It opened into the hold, but fitted so closely that Tom was unable to get it open even with the point of his knife. There was nothing for him to do but to spring out through the hatchway as he had done before.

As it was broad daylight he was certain to be seen. Still he figured that all hands were in the standing-room, and they would not be able to cut him off. He jumped up, caught the combing, or raised border of the hatch in which the cover fits, and raised himself up. Then he saw a large town before his eyes, stretching away to the right and the left along the river. He judged it was Glendale. The sloop was gliding up to a wharf, and Bunker, forward, and Frisbie, aft, were standing ready to spring ashore and tie the craft to spile heads.

Tom dropped back in the hold and waited until he felt the sloop bump against the wharf. Once more he jumped up and caught the combing.

Bunker and Frisbie were both on the wharf tying the lines.

"Now is my chance," thought the cub reporter.

He scrambled out on deck, sprang for the wharf as Whipple, who saw him, uttered a warning shout, and ran like a deer up the wharf. Turning his head he saw Frisbie in full chase. Loungers at the head of the wharf wondered what was the cause of the chase. To enlist their aid Frisbie shouted "Stop thief!"

Nobody interfered, and Tom darted across the street and up the street ahead. He soon left Frisbie far behind, and when that rascal reached the corner of the next street the boy was out of his sight. He gave up the chase and returned to the sloop. Tom pushed on till he believed he had outwitted his pursuer, and then he stopped to consider what he would do. He found himself facing the office of the Glendale Evening News. Entering the counting-room on the ground floor, he asked to be directed to the editorial rooms.

"Fourth floor—take the elevator," said the cashier.

Tom took the elevator and went up to the fourth floor. The sign on the door facing him read "Evening News. Editorial Rooms."

He opened the door and walked in. He found a small youth on guard in the outer space, and said:

"I'm a reporter on the Rushville Daily Planet. I would like to see the city editor of the News."

The boy entered the news room, came back in a minute and told Tom to follow him. He was taken to the city editor's desk. The Evening News had just gone to press, and the editor was through for the day. He was still in his shirt sleeves, with a copy of the News before him, scanning it over, and a briar root pipe in his mouth.

"Well, what can I do for you?" he said, looking the cub reporter over curiously.

"You can do a lot for me if you will," replied Tom, whose personal appearance, so far as his clothes went, was very much against him. "My name is Tom Chester. I was sent out on an important case by Mr. Brown, city editor of the Planet, yesterday afternoon, and owing to the strenuous conditions I've been up again, I haven't been able to get back to the office. I want to use your 'phone to communicate with my paper. I'm strapped, got only a quarter in my clothes, and so I can't go to a public 'phone. Whatever expense you are put to the Planet will stand for."

"Where's your credentials?"

"Haven't any. I'm a new hand, and I was sent out in a hurry to help the man assigned to the case."

"Then you're not a regular reporter?"

"No, I'm an extra, but that doesn't make any difference in this case."

"Sit down and I'll call up your paper."

It took a few minutes to reach the Planet office over the long-distance wire.

"This is the Glendale News office. Connect me with the city editor. Hello, is this the city editor?"

"Yes," answered Brown.

"I'm City Editor Smith, of the Evening News, Glendale."

"Well?"

"A young fellow about nineteen is here who says he's an extra on your paper. Calls himself Tom Chester. Says he's been out on some story since yesterday and has been unable to get back. Is he all right?"

Brown uttered an exclamation.

"Is he in your room?"

"Yes."

"Call him to the wire."

Smith motioned Tom to take the receiver.

"Hello, Mr. Brown," said the boy.

"Where in thunder have you been all this time? What have you been doing? Jackson says you left him in the lurch. What are you doing in Glendale?"

"I didn't leave Mr. Jackson in the lurch. He posted me at the back of a house on Webster avenue that he was watching from the front and told me to follow any one I saw leave the house by the back way. One of the men he described left the house just after dark, and I followed him on a car bound to the northern end of the lake. He went aboard a sloop at a wharf there. I followed him aboard on the sly, and picked up a story that will make your hair curl. The other two men I suppose Mr. Jackson was watching came along, and I was nabbed and made a prisoner. I have learned the iden-

tity of the three men, and one of them is a very important person in Rushville. I was carried across the lake and up the river a little way when I made my escape with a certain suit-case which contains what Mr. Jackson was out to locate if he could. You understand. I was recaptured by the men in the job this morning, but they did not get the suit-case. I'm the only person who knows where it is. They brought me to Glendale in the sloop, and I have just escaped from them again. As soon as I can get the suit-case I'll be back. But I must have money. I've only a quarter in my clothes. Can't you arrange with this paper to advance me \$5 or \$10. I must hire a rig to go down the river for the suit-case, and as it's after five now, I have no time to lose so as to get the story in the morning paper."

Tom rattled the above off as fast as he could talk, and some of it escaped Brown's ears, sharp as they were. The boy gave no hint of the nature of his story, for the city editor of the Evening News was within hearing, and he wanted his paper to score a beat. Had he mentioned the Anderson diamonds, Smith would have been right on, and doubtless he would have 'phoned later to the Planet's rival that a reporter from that paper had run down the Anderson diamond robbery crooks, and recovered the plunder, and probably a sharp reporter would have been sent to Glendale to waylay him and try to get enough facts to make a story for his paper. Tom believed that the mention of Jackson's name, and the fact that he (Tom) was working with Jackson on the Anderson robbery, would answer all purposes, and it did, though Brown was thoroughly astonished by the cub reporter's communication. As Jackson had failed to make any great headway in the case up to that point, the city editor was certainly surprised at the facts Tom sent over the wire—facts indicating that he had secured a story himself.

The mention of the suit-case which Tom said contained what Jackson was trying to locate suggested the diamonds. The very idea that the young extra reporter had discovered the jewels gave Brown a shock of excitement. He readily understood that Tom had a good reason for not being more explicit. He mentally praised the boy's sharpness, for the telephone often has other ears than those for whom a communication are intended. These thoughts flashed rapidly through Brown's brain, so rapidly, in fact, that Tom had hardly ceased, when he said:

"Ask the News editor to take the wire."

The result of the brief confab was that Smith took Tom downstairs and got him \$10 from the cashier, the same to be charged against the Rushville Planet. Tom then inquired for a livery-stable, as he intended to hire a horse and buggy and make his way to the lone farm down the river where the suit-case lay at the bottom of the dry well. As soon as he recovered it and got back to Glendale he would take the first train for Rushville.

Chapter VII.—A Tumble In Space.

Tom left the Evening News Office in a state of great exhilaration. He believed that his way

was clear now to success, and that his troubles were practically over. He pictured to himself the reception he would get from his city editor, and he judged that they would get all the space necessary to detail the facts. He would have a respectable bill against the paper on the following Monday, and he hoped to get steady work hereafter on the strength of his present efforts. Strange to say Tom never once thought about the \$20,000 reward offered by Anderson for the recovery of the diamonds. All he thought about was making a record in the office that would advance him in his chosen profession. Tom, however, was counting his chicken before they were hatched.

The way to success was not clear yet. Whipple, Frisbie and Bunker were out hunting for him. They regarded his recapture as a very important matter to themselves. Although they did not know how much he knew, nor whether he actually knew where the suit-case containing the diamonds was, nor what he intended doing now he was free, yet the fact that he was at large worried the first two greatly. Being still of the opinion that he had hidden the suit-case, they figured that he would lose no time in getting back to the place where he had left it.

"We must cut him off," said Whipple to Frisbie. "You and I will hire a rig and lie in wait for him down the road he must take if he starts for that farm. In the meantime, Bunker can try to catch him before he gets out of town."

So Whipple and Frisbie went to the same stable Tom had been directed to, and hired a horse and buggy for a short trip into the country, Whipple said. They started off in the rig about the time Tom finished his business at the Evening News office. Bunker, in the meanwhile, was walking around the business section, in the neighborhood of the Evening News office, in the hope of running across the boy. As luck would have it he spied him coming out of the newspaper office.

"I've got him now," he thought.

He hurried forward and grabbed Tom by the arm just as he was turning the next corner.

"Now, then, you must return to the sloop with me," he said.

"Never!" answered Tom, jerking himself free and taking to his heels.

"Stop thief!" cried Bunker, seeing that the boy was fleet-footed than himself, and would surely get away.

It was about half-past five and the street was alive with people going home from their work. The cry "Stop thief!" arrested their attention, and they looked around on the oncoming boy. There is a certain magic in those two words. It will start a pursuit sooner than any other kind of a cry. Several people tried to head the boy off. He dodged their grasp and took to the middle of the road in which there were many vehicles. Two or three persons joined Bunker in the chase, and "Stop thief!" was raised by them in their excitement. The cries and the sight of the flying boy induced others to take part in the pursuit, and soon a small crowd was following at the cub reporter's heels. Finding that he was likely to be headed off, Tom darted into the entrance of a six-story building and rushed up the stairs. The pursuers stopped

at the entrance and waited for Bunker to come up.

"What has he stolen?" somebody inquired.

Bunker did not stop to answer, but after learning that Tom had gone up the stairs, he followed. The young reporter, expecting to be followed, kept straight on to the top story, where he saw a ladder leading to an open scuttle. Pretty well winded by this time Tom ran up the ladder, closed the scuttle and sat upon it. Then he looked around. The building stood on the corner of the street. Between it and the adjoining building, which was three or four feet higher, was an open space about twelve feet wide, the depth of which Tom could not judge from where he sat. This open space cut off his escape from the roof, for each end of the building faced on a street, as did also the opposite side. While Tom was recovering his breath, he spied a couple of boys playing at see-saw on the roof of the next house. They straddled the ends of a long, wide board that rested across the center fire-wall. The sight gave Tom an idea.

He rushed to the edge of the roof and looked down. The space between the buildings was only about a story in depth, and a big feather mattress lay spread out on the roof below, where it had evidently been put to air. Several windows looked out into the space.

"Hello, boys!" shouted Tom.

The lads stopped see-sawing and looked at him inquiringly.

"Say, I want to cross over. Will you run the board across here so I can get over?" asked Tom.

"What do you want to get across for?" asked one of the youths.

"There's a man after me."

"What's he after you for?"

"I ran away from his sloop."

"Are you a sailor?"

"No. Hurry up. He knows I have come up to the roof here, and I expect to see him poke his head through the scuttle at any moment."

"Shall we do it, Sam?" asked the boy who had talked to Tom.

"Yes," said the other, whose name was Billy.

The boys lifted the plank off the fire wall and shoved it across the space between the buildings toward the young reporter. At that moment the scuttle was banged open and Bunker stuck his head out. He saw Tom, and he also saw what the two boys were doing. He easily divined the purpose the board was intended to fill. Fearing the boy would escape him, he jumped out and rushed to grab him. Tom saw him coming, and as the end of the board, which was raised on the two sides like a chute, touched the raised wall of the building, he sprang upon it and began to cross. He felt the chute bend more and more under his weight, then, with a splitting sound, it suddenly parted under him. He fell forward and instinctively caught at the two sides of the end held by Sam and Billy. His weight, together with the tilting of the chute, tore the board out of the youths' hands, and both he and the broken board disappeared downward.

Bunker uttered an exclamation of consternation, for he believed Tom had gone to his death. He ran to the parapet of the building and looked

downward, as the two lads were also doing from the opposite roof. The broken chute, both pieces of which had gone down, made a tremendous clatter when they struck the roof below. Tom lay on the feather bed, badly shaken up, but otherwise unhurt. Fortunately neither piece of board fell under or on top of him. He pulled himself together and stood erect. Then he looked up at the discomfited owner of the sloop, and waved his hands at the boys who had tried to help him.

"You didn't get me that time, Mr. Bunker," he said. "I wish you a good-afternoon."

Thus speaking, he stepped in at the open window facing him and disappeared.

CHAPTER VIII.—After the Suit-Case.

Tom found himself in a furnished suite of apartments, the occupants of which appeared to be away at the moment. As all the doors were locked, he was cooped in. Had Bunker been able to descend into the open space where the feather bed and the wreck of the chute lay, he could have found little difficulty in laying his hands on the cub reporter once more; or had he understood the situation and lay in wait at the street door for the boy to come out, he would have nabbed him. His inability to crawl down a twenty-foot wall shut off the first chance, and his ignorance of the boy's situation prevented him from adopting the second.

He did the best thing he could think of under the circumstances—he hurried back to the street, ran around to the other street, and after watching in vain for a few minutes for Tom to appear at the door, naturally concluded that he had got safely off. Tom waited half an hour in the greatest impatience for the tenant of the apartment to return and let him out. At the end of that time a woman appeared, and she was not a little alarmed on seeing him in her rooms.

"Don't be frightened, madam," said Tom. "I'm not a thief, or a bad character of any kind. I got here by accident by falling to the roof outside from the top of the next building."

He explained what had happened and said he could prove it by the remains of the plank outside, and by the testimony of the two boys if they could be found. The woman accepted his explanation and told him she thought he had had a narrow escape.

"I guess I did, ma'am. And now I must go, as I have important business to transact, and get back to Rushville before midnight if I can. I have already lost an hour, and that is more than I could spare."

He hurried to the stable he had been directed to, and asked for a rig.

"I only have on buggy, and that I hired out to a couple of men an hour ago," said the stable-keeper. "If a saddle horse would do you, I can accommodate you."

As it was now dark, and Tom had some doubts about the route to the lone farm, he decided that a saddle horse would be better than a buggy. He would doubtless be able to make better time, and that was very important to him, since the occupants of the lone farm might be calculated on to retire early, and he required their help, with

a rope, to get to get the suit-case out of the dry well. While the horse was being saddled he stepped into a small restaurant next door and had a cup of coffee and a sandwich. He also bought two sandwiches to take with him. Returning to the stable, he asked the proprietor how far it was to the lake.

"Are you going there?" asked the man, in some surprise.

"I'm going to a small farm that's a mile or two this side of it."

"The lake is all of ten or eleven miles in an air line, but it's nearer fifteen by the nearest route you could follow even on foot. If the farm you mention is two miles this side of it, you can calculate it's all of twelve miles from here. When do you expect to return the horse—some time to-morrow?"

"No. I expect to get back here by half-past ten to-night. If I don't I shall miss the last train to Rushville that is likely to do me any good, and it is a matter of great importance that I reach Rushville before midnight."

"As you don't seem to know your way to the farm, I don't see how you're going to make time in the dark. You won't find a good road much over half the way to the lake. The rest of the way will be rough going. As a light is likely to help you, I'll lend you a pocket flash-light, such as up-to-date burglars use these days."

The stableman got the apparatus from his office. It consisted of a cylinder six inches long, with a small bull's-eye at one end. It was operated by a battery, and to flash a light one had to press the button. He showed Tom how to use it, and the boy thanked him for the loan of it. He was sure it would prove useful to him.

Getting the bearings of the road leading southward, and a general idea of the course of the river, Tom started on what he hoped would be the last lap of his present newspaper experience. He hit the road all right and put the horse to its best speed, for he was accustomed to horseback riding. Glendale with its lights vanished behind him, and he pushed ahead into the dark country. The road was bordered by cultivated farms and trees were plenty along his route. He reeled off the first six miles with no trouble, and then he came to a place where the road swerved abruptly to the left and appeared to be right straight ahead in that direction. To the right ran a through road that looked like a Western trail.

"I'll have to take this," thought Tom, "for it sweeps around in the direction I am bound."

Flashing his bull's-eye he saw that it offered fair traveling for a team and easy for a horse alone. So he pressed on, flashing his light ahead frequently to see that he didn't leave the trail. Half a mile from the regular road the one he was following took him through a wood that was dark and solemn in its isolation. The path was easy to follow, for the trees had been cut away to enable a wagon to get through without difficulty. Coming out of the wood, the rude road swerved toward the river and ran for a mile within a quarter of a mile of it. Then he turned to the left to avoid a hill of rock, and so went on. It was about nine as Tom approached the farm-house. He was still half a mile

from it. Suddenly he saw a dark object ahead, drawn up on one side of the road.

It looked like a vehicle of some kind. He flashed his bull's-eye upon it and saw it was a horse and buggy. The bright disk of light also revealed two men standing beside it. One of them looked familiar to the boy. To make sure of the man's identity, he flashed the light again. The men were no longer where he had seen them. They had jumped behind the vehicle. Suspecting a hold-up, Tom gave his horse the rein and dashed past. No effort was made to stop him, and he went on till he finally saw the farmhouse ahead. He rode as far as the gate, dismounted and tied his horse. A light shone through one of the lower windows which showed that the occupants had not gone to bed, at least not all of them. Tom walked up to the door and knocked. Then the door was opened by a rough-looking man, who asked him what he wanted.

"I want you to help me recover a suit-case that fell into the dry well near the road," said Tom.

The man looked surprised.

"The dry well," he said. "How did it get into the well?"

"It fell in."

"How could it do that? The well is covered with boards."

"The boards were rotten and the suit-case went through them as though they were made of paper."

The man seemed to think the boy's story somewhat fishy.

"What were you doing near the well?"

"I came into your yard to get a drink at your well. On my way back to the road the accident happened."

"When did it happen? A few minutes ago?"

"No. Early this morning, before daylight."

"What were you doing around here at that hour?" asked the man, suspiciously.

"Trying to find my way to Glendale."

"That town is ten miles north of here. Where did you come from?"

"From a sloop that brought me from Rushville."

"How came you to leave the sloop way down in this neighborhood?"

"I left it for the good of my health."

"The good of your health?"

"There were three rascals aboard of her, one of them being her owner. They were keeping me aboard against my will, so as soon as the chance presented itself I made my escape, and was passing this farm when the suit-case got into the dry well."

Behind the speaker Tom saw the shadow of a woman listening.

"They had their reasons. But I say, I'm in a hurry to recover that suit-case. Will you fetch a rope and give me a hand? I'll give you a dollar to pay you for your trouble."

"Where have you been since the suit-case dropped into the well?"

"Mostly aboard the sloop. The men caught me and took me back."

"That's why you didn't call here before about it?"

"Yes."

"Where is the sloop now?"

"I left her at Glendale."

"And have you walked back here from town?"

"No; I rode here."

"Where's your horse?" asked the man, looking around.

"Tied to the fence near the gate."

"This is a late hour to look for a suit-case in the dry well."

"I know it, but I couldn't get here any earlier."

"You say you'll give me a dollar to help you get it back?"

"Yes."

"All right. I'll help you. Wait here till I get a rope and a lantern."

Tom waited and the man got the articles.

"You'll have to go down into the well, as you're lighter than me. You can climb a rope, I suppose? The hole is less than twenty feet deep," said the man.

"Oh, yes," answered Tom.

"You'd better come, old woman, and hold the lantern."

The woman offered no objection, and the three proceeded to the dry well. The man parted the bushes and flashed the lantern at the mouth of the well. A great, gaping hole presented itself instead of the board he had last seen there.

"How came you to drop the suitcase? It must have been heavy to demolish the boards that were across the well."

"It was quite heavy, but the boards were rotten or they wouldn't have given away."

"I told you them boards were rotten, Jim, and that one of our animals was likely to fall through any time," said the woman.

The man scowled unpleasantly.

"Never mind what you told me. The boards are gone now and I'll have to put others across it to-morrow."

He tied a stone to the end of the rope and lowered it in the well, after which he secured the other end to a tree close by.

"Now, then, young fellow, you can slide down. Untie the stone and tie the suit-case to the rope. I'll haul it up and then drop it down again so you can climb up afterwards."

Tom grasped the rope and slid down to the bottom of the dry well, which was a deal pleasanter than falling into it as he had originally done. He found the suit-case where he left it, tied the end of the rope to it and sang out to the man to haul away. He watched the man haul it up, with the woman holding the lantern at the mouth to give him light. Their figures looked weird and uncertain in the semi-gloom that surrounded them, the sky above not being very bright. The man lifted the suit-case out and noted the fact that it was fairly heavy. He held a talk with the woman while Tom impatiently waited for the rope to be cast down again. Suddenly the light disappeared, and with it went the man and the woman.

"Hi, there! Why don't you throw the rope down; I'm in a hurry," cried Tom.

He received no reply.

Silence and darkness reigned at the top. Tom waited a moment and shouted again, but without

result. Then the fact dawned upon him that the man and woman had gone away with the suitcase and left him to his fate.

CHAPTER IX.—Faced By A Great Temptation.

"Well, if they aren't a nice rascally pair I'm no judge of the breed," said Tom to himself. "They suspect that the suitcase contains something of value, and they've got away to break it open and find out. How lucky it is that when I was here before I discovered a way out! I'll astonish them. I'll give them the surprise of their lives."

Tom flashed his bull's-eye around till it rested on the hole. Getting down on his hands and knees he started, for the second time, to make his way through the subterranean tunnel. Knowing that the way was clear, from his former experience, Tom only used his flashlight occasionally to assure himself that no obstruction, such as a falling in of the earth, had come into the tunnel since he was there last. Nothing like that had happened, and in due time he came out through the bushes in the little dell of the wood. Then he made a bee-line for the lone farmhouse. His course took him past the dry well, and he saw the rope, still tied to the tree, lying on the ground.

"Some people only need the opportunity to show their real natures," thought the young reporter. "I'll take that rope along. I might find it useful."

He made a slip noose at one end of it and coiled the rest up. The light still burned in the window. Pressing his face against the pane, he looked into the room. It was the living-room of the dwelling. On one side was a cooking stove, flanked on either side with pots and pans. On the other side was an old-time dresser on which dishes were slouchily arranged. In the center was a good-sized table. On the table stood the suit-case, which the man was trying to pry open with the point of a stout knife, the woman standing opposite him and watching his exertions with covetous interest. Tom glided to the door and softly tried it. He found it fast. He went to the front door and tried that, but it, too, was locked. He tried the two front windows without result. One of the second story windows was open.

"If I could reach that I could get in all right," he thought.

The kitchen chimney rose between that window and the next one. A moment's thought suggested a plan to the boy. Opening the noose and dropping the rest of the rope on the ground, Tom waved the noose several times around his head and let it go. His object was to lasso the chimney. He had never tried this kind of business before, and the chances were against success short of several trials. Luck and energy he put into his effort carried the noose up to the top of the chimney, and it settled around the brick work.

"Eureka!" cried Tom, in great satisfaction.

He immediately climbed up to the level of the two windows. Both, however, were out of his

reach. He had calculated on that, and went on till the gutter was within his reach. Grabbing the gutter, he made his way to a point above the open window. His dangling legs tapped against the glass. With the toes of his shoes he pushed down the upper sash, and the lower one went with it. After resting a few moments on the top of both sashes, he shoved one leg into the room behind the side of the open space occupied by the upper sash. With this grip to steady himself he let go of the gutter, and, holding on to the rope, sank gradually down to a squatting position on the two sashes. Throwing the slack of the rope into the room, he straddled the sashes.

Taking out his knife, he cut the rope as high as he could reach, and then swung himself into the room, alighting noiselessly on the rag carpet.

He coiled the remnant of the rope around his arm and took a rapid survey of the apartment. It was a bedroom furnished with common furniture, the walls papered with a cheap print. Alongside the head of the bed hung a navy revolver in a holster.

"I'll take that," said Tom. "There are two of them, and I need a persuader of that kind to win out."

The door was not locked, and Tom walked out on to the landing. Flashing his electric light, he saw the carpeted stairway before him. He slipped down to the little hall below and saw the front door ahead. To provide for a rapid retreat, if that should prove necessary, Tom decided to open the door. He found it was locked, bolted, and further secured by a stout chain. He let down the chain, drew the bolt, turned the key and opened the door wide.

"Now to face the music," he said, starting for the back of the house where the living-room was.

The rear door of the hall opened directly into it without any intervening entry. This showed that there was only one stairs to the second floor. Opening the door cautiously, Tom looked in. The man had by this time broken the lock of the suit-case, opened it and had discovered the nature of its contents, which naturally staggered him and his wife. They decided, as most any one would under the circumstances, that the boy who was after the suit-case was a young thief, who had stolen the display of diamonds. No wonder he had skipped from the sloop, if it was a sloop, and had been, as they figured, skulking around that lonesome neighborhood since he committed the crime. And now they had come into possession of his plunder, the richness of which fairly took away their breaths. On the table lay the diamond tiara, sparkling in the lamplight like the waters of the lake in the moonshine.

The woman's hand was extended towards it as thought to grasp the magnificent object, and yet half afraid to touch it. The man held a handful of diamond rings and other jewelry he had just taken from the case, and appeared half stupefied at their evident value.

"To think that boy was a thief!" said the woman, running the tip of her tongue over her dry, thin lips.

"That's what he was, the young villain!" said her husband.

"What are we to do with all this diamond jewelry. It represents a fortune. It would make

us wealthy. We need never do another stroke of work again as long as we live. It would make a lady of me and a gentleman of you."

"Do with it? Why, keep it, of course, and sell it little by little in Chicago and other big cities," replied her husband, in a voice husky with suppressed excitement.

"But the risk!"

"Risk be hanged! No one will ever know we go it."

"The boy knows."

"Suppose he does? He's at the bottom of the dry well, and he couldn't get out without help to save his life. I'll put fresh boards over the mouth in the morning and cover them with stones. No fear but he'll stay there and never bother us."

"He'd starve to death, then."

"Let him. He deserves to."

"But that would be murder," said the woman in an awed tone.

"Murder! Well, suppose it is? Who cares—I don't. Murder has been done a thousand times for a dollar or two. Shall we hesitate when it means a fortune to us? Look at these diamonds, old woman. Feast your eyes on them. Have you any idea what they're worth? That crown there must be worth a mint. It's covered with diamonds. See how they glisten. The very sight maddens me. Think how we have slaved for a pittance on this miserable farm. Then think of the people who can afford to own such stuff as this living on the fat of the land, in luxury and ease, riding in automobiles, with servants at their beck and call, and a fine house. We can have all that, do you hear? We can have a fine house, servants, good food, an automobile, fine clothes and all that. Don't you want to dress in silks and satins? Don't you want to sit around and be waited on?"

"Yes, yes!" breathed the woman, in a sobbing tone. "I do—I do! I've been a drudge since I was born, and I yearn for the grand things of life. Oh, if I only could have them!" and she clasped her hands with pathetic eagerness.

"You shall have them. What's to prevent you now? Here are the glittering geese that shall lay them for you. We'll go away in the morning and never return. We'll sell this stuff cautiously. No one shall ever know we have it. We'll get rich little by little. We won't take any chances—not a chance. We'll keep moving about. Chicago first, then maybe New York. Ah, New York is the place where one can lose themselves easily in the crowd, and there one can sell anything and no questions are asked."

"How I'd like to wear that crown!" cried the woman, taking it up and gazing on it with the look of a mother at her first born. "Isn't it a beauty? It's fit for a queen. The woman who lost it must be the wife of a millionaire. Some in this world are so fortunate, while others—"

She was in the act of lifting the tiara to place it on her head when her eyes suddenly rested on Tom, who had softly entered the room with determination written on his face. With a short scream she dropped the articles and stared with eyes distended by terror at the boy.

"What's the matter with you, old woman?" growled the man.

"Look! look! It's the boy! Oh, heavens!"

The man swung around and confronted the cub reporter. With an imprecation he reached for the knife that lay on the table.

"Drop it! Drop everything, or, by jingo, I'll drop you!"

As Tom spoke, in ringing tones, he raised his revolver and covered the farmer. He was clearly boss of the situation.

CHAPTER X.—Catching A Tartar.

"Now, then, put everything back into that suitcase—everything, do you understand? If you try to hold out a single gem I'll shoot you," said Tom.

"Blame you!" cried the man. "How did you escape from the well?"

"That needn't worry you. I got out just in time to block your rascally plans."

"You're a rascal yourself. You stole all this stuff and then tried to work off a cock-and-bull story on us to get the suitcase, which you probably dropped into the well on purpose to hide it for the time being," said the man.

"You're wrong. Had you read the papers lately you would know that these diamonds were stolen from the home of Joseph Anderson, of Rushville. I've been following the thieves, and escaped from them with the suit-case last night a mile from here along the river. I'm going to take them back to their owner."

"You lie!" hissed the man. "You are trying to deceive us again in order to get away with your plunder; but I'll prevent you. I'll—"

"You'll do nothing. I've got you dead to rights. Back against that wall, both of you, or, by heaven, I'll lay you out stiff. Back, I say! I can put the gems in the bag myself, than I'll be sure that none of them escape."

The man hesitated and made another reach for the knife. Tom pulled the trigger! There was a flash and a stunning report, and the man's arm fell to his sides, broken by the ball, and he uttered a hoarse cry of agony. The woman uttered a scream of fear and cowered down. Tom stepped forward, menacing them with the smoking weapon, and they retreated against the wall. Laying the revolver on the table, but keeping his eye on the pair, the boy returned the diamonds and the tiara to the suit-case. After making sure that none had escaped his notice, as far as he could tell, he found that the lock was out of business, so he proceeded to tie the case with a piece of rope.

This done, he backed out of the room with the gun in his hand, and left the house by the front door, shutting it after him. He reached his horse and tied the case to the back of his saddle. As he was in the act of mounting, a man rushed out of the shrubbery, and grabbed him, pulling him back. The horse, startled by the action, galloped off up the road in the direction of Glendale, passing another man and a horse and buggy standing by the roadside.

"So you had the suit-case at that house, did you?" said the voice of Whipple in Tom's ear. "I knew you were lying when you said you didn't know anything about it."

"Let me go or it will be worse for you," cried Tom, struggling desperately to release himself.

"Let you do? Not on your life. You're too dangerous to our interests to be allowed at large until we have made some definite arrangement with you. Come along with me. I've a buggy close by, and back to Glendale you'll go in it."

"You'll never take me back to Glendale, Mr. Whipple. If you don't unhand me, I'll shoot you."

"You'll do what? Shoot me!"

"Yes, I'll shoot you."

Tom swung half around and shoved the muzzle of the navy revolver in Whipple's face. With an exclamation of consternation the man let go of him and stepped back.

"That's right," said Tom. "Now let's talk."

"Confound you!" hissed Whipple.

"Don't lose your temper, Mr. Whipple. Always be cool under adverse circumstances. You have laid claim to that suit-case. Do you assert that the diamonds and other gems, including the tiara, belong to you?"

"So you know what is in it?"

"I do. I know that it represents the loot of the Anderson diamond robbery that is the sensation of the week in Rushville."

"I was right in suspecting that you are connected with the Rushville police. We ought to have thrown you into the lake when we had you in our power."

"You were not in the right in connecting me with the police. I told you I had nothing to do with them."

"Then who are you?"

"A reporter of the Daily Planet."

"Ha! Is that true?"

"It is true."

"What have you learned about the case?"

"I have learned enough to send all concerned in the robbery to jail."

"But you haven't caught us yet."

"I seem to have you in a tight fix."

"Don't be too sure of it. You have given yourself away, and now we'll know what to expect from you. We shall deal with you accordingly, unless——"

"Unless what?"

"You stand in with us."

"I am not likely to do that."

"I'll guarantee you \$10,000 in cash if you will join us."

"I'm not for sale, Mr. Whipple."

"Don't be a fool. What will you make by turning in your story to the paper? The reputation of having done a clever thing, and probably a small raise in salary. What's that alongside of \$10,000?"

"You forget there is a \$20,000 reward offered for the capture of the thieves and the recovery of the diamonds."

"You haven't captured the thieves yet, and the diamonds have run away from you."

"I have caught one of the thieves—you."

"Can you prove I had a hand in stealing the diamonds?"

"I think I will come pretty close to doing it."

"Let me hear how close."

"I am not telling you what I know."

"You refuse to go in with us?"

"Absolutely."

"Grab him, Jim."

Tom wheeled around suddenly, expecting to find Frisbie close behind him, but saw no one. When he turned back Whipple had disappeared in the darkness.

"That's one on me," thought Tom. "The fellow fooled me nicely. However, I don't care, I couldn't have secured him anyway. It will be the business of the police to capture the thieves. But I must follow up my horse and get possession of the suit-case again. I don't believe he ran far. I ought to come up with him somewhere along the road. But what if Whipple and Frisbie find the horse first. They have a buggy, for I'm sure that buggy I passed on the road was theirs, and that they were the two men my flashlight caught. I must get a move on. I am having a strenuous time of it to-night, and I thought when I left Glendale that I should have smooth sailing. If I fail to recover the diamonds I will lose my chance of getting the reward, and that would be hard luck after having twice had the plunder in my possession. Well, we shall see how I come out."

When he was communing with him, Tom was hurrying forward on a line with the road, keeping out of sight lest he should be surprised by the two rascals who he believed were lying in wait for him. He was not wrong in his surmise. Whipple had rejoined his associate, and they were waiting for him to come along in pursuit of his horse, on whose back was strapped the suit-case containing the diamonds. So while they lay in wait near their buggy for Tom to come along the road, the boy passed their ambush out of their sight and hurried forward, keeping a sharp eye out for his runaway horse.

CHAPTER XI.—Conclusion.

The horse had run considerably further than Tom supposed, and then he eased up and began nibbling the grass by the roadside. The boy overtook him at last, to his great satisfaction, and found that the suit-case had not become dislodged. At that moment Tom heard the sound of buggy wheels coming along the road at a rapid rate.

"Those rascals are after this horse and the diamonds. They hope to overtake the animal before I do. They might have done so had they not delayed matters. They were looking for me, I'll bet. Now they won't get either me or the diamonds."

Thus thought the cub reporter as he sprang into the saddle and gave his horse the rein. The buggy swung around the bend in the road and the men in it saw the horse and its rider. They easily guessed that Tom had played a march on them, and they whipped up in a desperate effort to overtake him. The boy saw that it was going to be a race and he spurred his animal forward. It was a race for a mile or two, but the advantage all lay with the boy, who steadily widened out his distance and finally left them so far behind that the pursuit became hopeless. He reached Glendale without further adventure and took the horse to its stable. There he found that it wanted but a few minutes of

eleven. He could not possibly get the train. With the suit-case in his hand he left the station and found his way to a pay telephone booth. He called up the Planet office and had to wait five minutes before the connection was made.

"Give me Mr. Brown," he asked the night switch-board operator.

"Hello," came a voice he recognized as Brown's.

"This is Tom Chester."

"Well, why haven't you got here with your story? Are you still in Glendale?"

"Yes. I've missed the train. I've recovered the suit-case, however, but I had the time of my life doing it. You'll have to take my story over the wire."

"What are the main features of it?"

"The recovery of the stolen Anderson diamonds. I have them now in my possession—and the identity of the men who engineered the burglary."

"What! Have you really discovered all that?" cried Brown, in some excitement, for he saw in Tom's statement a news beat for the Planet.

"Yes. The man who got up the burglary is Horace Chiswell, treasurer of the Rushville Vacuum Tire Works, and Mr. Anderson's nephew. He is now in Chicago, waiting for his confederates to bring on the diamonds."

Brown jumped nearly a foot.

"Are you sure of that fact? Chiswell has the reputation of being one of the biggest guns in Rushville. This is a serious charge you are making against him."

"I don't care how big a gun he is, what I'm telling you is the truth, and I can swear to it. The proof lie in the fact that he is deeply involved, financially, owing to the pace he has been going. He has raised \$30,000 on six notes bearing the forged signature of the president of the Tire Works, and these notes are held by the company's bank, the name of which I haven't found out. At the next semi-annual meeting of the directors he has been instructed to furnish a complete statement of the company's obligations as well as resources, and unless he can take up those six notes he's bound to face exposure and all the consequences it implies. He planned the robbery, expecting to raise the necessary funds as well as a surplus by the sale of the diamonds. That, of course, is out of the question now, for I have the diamonds and will bring them to the office first thing in the morning and turn them over to the cashier for safe keeping until they are handed over to their owner," said Tom.

"Where did you obtain all these facts?" asked the astonished city editor.

"I overheard a conversation which was being carried on in the cabin of the sloop between one of Chiswell's confederates named Whipple and the owner of the sloop, an old pal of his, named Bunker. Chiswell came aboard later, disguised by a heavy beard, accompanied by his other confederate, a man named Jim Frisbie. Both of these men are employed by the Vacuum Tire Works, and helped Chiswell blow open his uncle's safe. Chiswell saw me listening and I was caught and confined in the hold. While there I found a chance to look into the cabin through a break in the bulkhead, and I saw the

stolen tiara and other diamond jewelry spread out on the table. The sudden appearance of a police launch coming up the river frightened the men. They put the diamonds back in a suit-case and ran close to the bank. They expected the sloop would be overhauled, and they felt the necessity of getting me and the diamonds out of her before the officers came up. In the excitement I made my escape and got away with the diamonds. There is a lot more to the story. You'd better have a man take it down for publication in ship-shape style."

Brown thought so, too, and told Tom he would be switched to one of the expert typewriters, and the boy was directed to dictate his story in regular form. It took the cub reporter some time to tell his story from beginning to end. Another reporter was sent to the house of the president of the Vacuum Tire Works with a confidential communication saying that the Planet had received information from a reliable source that Horace Chiswell had raised \$30,000 on six notes deposited with the Rushville National Bank, bearing the forged endorsement of the president of his company, and asking if the said official knew anything about it, and if he didn't it would be advisable for him to communicate with the cashier of the bank at once.

Brown also called up the bank cashier at his home and, after stating the facts, asked him if it were true that Chiswell had cashed six or more notes for \$5,000 each. The cashier declined to answer the question, as Brown expected he would, but the city editor accomplished his object when he told him that word had come to the office that six of the notes were forgeries. The police had been communicated with, and orders for the arrest of Whipple, Frisbie and Bunker were wired to the Glendale police. The sloop had left her moorings and gone up the river, but somebody who saw her leave told the police the direction she took, and she was overhauled by a launch and the three men were arrested.

By that time Horace Chiswell had been arrested in Chicago at one of the big hotels, and was later brought back to Rushville. Whipple and Frisbie denied the whole story under police fire, but Bunker gave in and confirmed everything Tom had sent in. The extra issued by the Planet gave the full facts, for the six forged notes had been brought to light and repudiated by the president of the Tire Works. Tom Chester was complimented by the managing editor and promoted to be a regular, with steady work. He also received the \$20,000 reward from Mr. Anderson.

Chiswell, Whipple and Frisbie were tried in due course. They were convicted and got what was coming to them. By that time Tom had proved that his efforts in the Anderson Diamond Robbery was no flash in the pan, but that he had the real stuff in him, and he continued to do better right along until he came to be recognized as one of the stars in the newspaper game.

Next week's issue will contain "UP TO THE MINUTE; or, FROM OFFICE BOY TO BROKER."

CURRENT NEWS

SHEEPMAN STRANGLED COYOTE

Grappling with a coyote that attacked him while he was alone with a band of sheep, Michael Tellechea, shepherd of Amadee, Cal., strangled the animal with his bare hands. In the struggle Tellechea was bitten on the hand.

ELEPHANTS RIP UP PIPES

Wild elephants have caused considerable difficulty on the Island of Sumatra during oil development work, as these animals seem to have taken a special dislike to the pipe lines laid above ground through the jungles, and have repeatedly torn them up, so that gangs of men are kept busy repairing the damage.

WILL SEEK PIRATE GOLD

A syndicate to recover "pirate gold" is being formed in Cape May, N. J., according to Jay E. Mecay, Cape May business man, its organizer. There are thousands of dollars' worth of gold in the hulk of a Spanish vessel which sank off Turtle Cut Inlet a century ago, according to Mr. Mecay.

The vessel, the Matizaneros, was manned by pirates en route from southern waters to New York, Mr. Mecay said, and a gale drove the ship on the shoal, about seven miles north of Cape May.

DOG PRISONER SHOT

After their owners had several times risked death, dangling in midair at the end of a 400-foot rope in an effort to rescue them, two fox hounds which had become imprisoned in a crevice far down the side of Stone Mountain, Ga., were shot to save them for starvation.

The dogs went over the edge of the gigantic rock several days before while chasing a fox and slipped with but slight injury into a crevice several hundred feet down the side.

W. O. and Ronald Venable, owners of the dogs, procured ropes and let themselves off into space in vain efforts to reach the crevice.

SENATE PAGES GET A TREAT

"Do any of you boys want to go to the ball game?" inquired Senator Rawson of Iowa, as he passed a small group of Senate pages the other afternoon.

"Yes," replied all the youngsters at once.

"Then all of you may go," said Wawson, handing them a \$20 bill. As a result twenty pages went to the game.

When the circus comes to town Senator Elkins of West Virginia will be host to the pages. In this kindly office he succeeds Senator Phelan of California, who always took the boys with him to the circus.

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Daring Dan Dobson

— OR —

THE BOY WHO BEAT THE MOONSHINERS

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER XVI.—(Continued.)

Down the road, with a revolver ready in his hand, our hero slowly advanced.

He was prepared for an attack of some hidden foe. He knew that they were near enough to the region of Jake Newcastle's influence to be in danger.

But no one leaped at him, and he walked stumbling over the muddy ruts, and once tripping for a disagreeable fall, over a piece of fallen branch, when he went too near the side of the rough road.

At last after traveling in this unsatisfactory way for what seemed fifteen minutes or so, Dan began to feel that he was making a dunce out of himself.

Nothing happened.

There was no sound of any one ahead of him. Perhaps he had taken the wrong road.

The man must have turned the other way—it might have been a trick to entice him away and leave the horses unguarded.

A thousand such thoughts flitted through his mind.

But just at this instant Dan saw a light flash a little to the left of him.

He was attentive, and he stood stock still to await developments.

There was a low spoken word, and the voice of a woman made reply.

It was so very still that Dan could hear the click of a latch as the door was pulled open wider, showing the interior of a rough farmhouse, as well as he could see.

Dan hesitated to listen to the words of Matthews and the woman, whose voice was answering the fellow's own, but he heard his own name mentioned.

"Tell him it is Dobson, all right," were Matthews' words. "There's no mistake. They're coming with the revenoos!"

These words were enough to convince Dan that the man was no less than a spy for Jake Newcastle, and he determined that if possible he would thwart the scheming rogue.

"Old Zachary said this man was as faithful as the stars. Well, the best of men will judge character wrongly, and this is where my good friend did," thought young Dobson.

Indian fashion, he crawled along the roadway, past the house.

He knew from the general direction that this way he would be able to intercept any one traveling towards the mountain district.

As he went along, he heard the words of Matthews in further orders:

"Now, tell him that I'm going to hamstring the horses before they leave, and put some pizen in the oats so that they won't be able to do much speedin'—so it'll be easy fer him ter lay a trap for this gang o' men."

"I'll do it; I'll tell it," replied the woman, and then Dan heard the sound of Matthews' footsteps along the roadway toward the farmhouse once more.

The door shut.

But, in a little bit, it opened, and this time the woman hurried forth with a lantern, as she walked around toward a small barn.

She passed within ten feet of where Dan was watching, and he saw, to his surprise, that she was young and very beautiful, even in those flickering lights and shadows.

"I wonder how I can stop her?" thought Dan.

He heard her open the door of the barn and there came the thud of a horse's nervous hoofbeats on the hard ground of the stall.

"Whoa, Nancy," was her soft admonition to the animal. Her voice seemed doubly pretty to Dan, now that he remembered her handsome features. "I'll be a-ridin' ye, mare—we've got a long race to win."

The girl saddled her horse rapidly, and then the steed was led to the door of the barn.

She blew out the lantern, and hung it on a hook by the portal.

There was the sound of her swinging into the saddle, and Dan knew he was to make his last attempt.

He would not have injured her for the world, but he did intend to frighten her for the cause of law and order.

"Click!"

He purposely pulled back the hammer on the fine automatic revolver, in order to make a suspicious noise.

The girl breathed hard, for she had heard it.

"What's that? Who's thar?"

She barely whispered the words.

But Dan caught them.

"Stop where you are, or I'll shoot your horse first and then you."

These words naturally held her, for Dan could judge of her love for the animal by the way he felt toward his own "Starlight." He would have risked much to prevent that beloved steed from being hurt.

The girl reined in her animal, and asked, in a low voice:

"What you want, stranger?"

"Get off that horse!" was Dan's reply. "You go back to your cabin, or you'll never get past here alive!"

"What you pick on me for?" she drawled, plaintively. "I ain't a-hurtin' nobody. I'm jest a pore country girl, and I've got to go on an errand for the doctor, stranger."

The sly minx was playing for time.

(To be continued.)

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

PEARLS FROM FISH SCALES

In Fleeton, Va., they have employed a French woman, who is engaged in making imitation pearls from the essence of fish scales. She is said to have made some fine specimens of "pearls."

This new and novel enterprise is attracting considerable attention. The fishermen are being paid 10 cents a pound for the fish scales.

The scales of only certain species of fish are good for this purpose, such as shad, river herring and sea herring having value. The last year, it is said, six tons of alewife scales alone were collected and sold.

LARGEST NUT CROP

The largest nut crop Asia Minor has produced in eight years is harvested and ready for shipment from Constantinople. Fully a third of the crop, which is chiefly filberts, will go to America, while the balance will remain in Turkey.

Much of the crop is grown in the interior and brought to Trebizend by nomad camel trains. Shelled filberts are sold here at about 3 cents a pound, competing successfully with all other food products. The nuts are used as both vegetable and dessert.

300 MILES ON 5-CENT FUEL

Three hundred miles by an automobile on a gallon of fuel costing 5½ cents. That is the claim H. H. Elmer, treasurer and general manager of the Globe Malleable Iron and Steel Company of Syracuse, N. Y., makes for an engine designed by himself, revealed to the directorate of the company at its annual meeting recently. Internationally known engineering experts, including Arthur West, chief engineer of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, have inspected Mr. Elmer's engine and are said to have pronounced it hundreds of years ahead of the times.

The fuel used is oil, either mineral, animal or vegetable. No ignition or carbureter is used. The principle of the discovery is based on the chemistry of oil, according to Mr. Elmer.

MICHIGAN MAN'S BEARD NINE FEET LONG

The long whiskered championship of the world is claimed by John J. Tanner, 84, for more than half a century a resident of Brighton, Mich.

His beard measures exactly nine feet from chin to tip. Ordinarily Mr. Tanner controls it by thrusting the end inside the band of his trousers.

More than fifty years ago, when Mr. Tanner's beard was only two or three feet in length, he decided to seek the championship. To this end he braided his beard and tucked it inside his vest. The whiskers soon attained proportions making the braiding impracticable.

Ten years ago Mr. Tanner's beard was six feet long. Five years ago two feet more had been added and now it measures nine. The owner hopes to attain a growth of twelve feet.

STUNG BY BEE, DIES IN HOUR

Stung on the right temple by a honey bee the other morning Harry Collard, a farmer living four miles from Caldwell, N. J., died half an hour later. After returning from town, where several of his friends remarked that he seemed in perfect health, Mr. Collard began chopping wood. A few minutes later he hurried to the house, telling his wife that he had been stung by a bee.

Mrs. Collard discovered the stinger and extracted it. As her husband's pain seemed to increase she set out for the nearest house to telephone for a physician while his sister, Miss Matilda Collard, applied first aid.

The sick man's neck began to swell. He soon lapsed into unconsciousness and died before a physician arrived. Coroner Thomas J. Lewis said death was due to a stroke of apoplexy caused by the shock of the insect's sting and a weak heart.

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THE MIDSHIPMAN'S PERIL

By PAUL BRADDON

The Wildcat had been on a long and adventurous cruise, when she dropped anchor off one of the many uninhabited island of the Archipelago.

A party was sent ashore to seek for water. They were commanded by a midshipman, and consisted of six whites and two negro sailors.

One of the latter—the crew's cook—accompanied the party with much evident reluctance.

"Now, then, you lazy skunk, jump out and roll up that water cask!" said the midshipman, accompanying his orders with a kick on the cook's shins.

"What fo' you do dat, Massa Hardy? Sunbeam no skunk."

"Don't answer me; be off."

"Luff, ye swab!" growled the quartermaster, helping Sunbeam out of the boat.

Sunbeam's eyes rolled and his teeth shone, but he said never a word then.

The party drew up the boat and at once moved inland.

The island was a little land of luxury and beauty, and the men were nothing loath to idle a few hours away, and so looked very indifferently for the water they had been sent for.

"We must separate," said Midshipman Hardy; "go in pairs, you, and make a circle of four miles, returning here if you do not discover water. If you do, the first man who has the luck must fire his pistol. Sunbeam, you keep with the quartermaster."

The day was closing in, and Mr. Hardy was afraid of having to return without the precious fluid, or make a night of it on the island.

He, at least, was zealous in prosecuting his search.

But the dim dusk had come on before he had made any discovery, and then he found himself on the edge of a ravine, and alone.

His companion had lagged behind, or purposely slipped away.

"Confound him!" he muttered, and then charmed with the glorious view before him, stood in charmed reverie until darkness shut out the view from his gaze.

Drawing his pistol he fired in the air, and replaced the weapon in his belt.

Some startled birds flew past him, creating a loud noise among the trees. Then again the place was still as a churchyard.

"Two to one," he said, inwardly, "I shall not find my way back—what's that? Surely there are no wild animals here?"

He was turning around, when something struck against his ankles, or his feet got entangled in something.

He was too bewildered to know which, and his bewilderment deepened into horror when he found himself being thrown violently backward in the direction of the chasm on whose brink he had lingered.

"My!" he cried. "It is death to fall down here!"

He made a grab at the fragile bushes that lined the brink of the chasm with both hands, and then uttered a cry.

"Monster!" was his shout; "who are you?"

He felt himself being literally dragged over the ravine. He struggled madly to regain his position.

But his legs and body were hanging in space. The fragile bushes gave way beneath his weight, and with a silect plunge he went rolling down into darkness—dead to all bodily pain now, perhaps dead to the world.

"Mates, it's kinder queer Mr. Hardy don't come back; that's the second gun from the ship," said the quartermaster.

"Very; but hallo! here comes Sunbeam."

"Ay—ay; but he's alone."

Sunbeam, looking hot and terrified, and trembling like a beaten cur, sneaked up to the boat.

The quartermaster looked him square in the face.

"Where did you get to, you lubberly nigger—eh? You give me the slip; where's Mr. Hardy?"

"Golly, how I know? I lose my way."

"You lie! You've been up to some devil's work; bring him along, boys, and let's signal for Mr. Hardy. You stay and look to the boat, Charley."

Charley was the negro sailor.

Silently they marched back into the interior, firing a pistol at short intervals.

No answer came! at last their ammunition was exhausted.

The quartermaster called his mates aside.

"Mates, what shall we do about it?"

"Scare the darned nigger till he owns up. I believe he's knocked Hardy on the head."

"How shall we scare him?"

"Dig a hole and bury him," suggested one.

The quartermaster turned to Sunbeam.

"Look here, you black cuss, jest pay out, and tell us what you done with Mr. Hardy, or I'll be derved if we won't bury yer alive."

Sunbeam still swore solemnly that he knew nothing of Mr. Hardy, and the more he swore to it the more the men doubted him.

"Dig the hole, mates," said the quartermaster.

The men set to work, while the quartermaster stood over Sunbeam with drawn cutlass.

The negro never believed for an instant that these men would dare to put their threat into execution.

Half an hour of quaking and shaking, during which he was repeatedly asked to confess.

The hole was deep enough, the men thought, and he was dragged toward it.

His howls rang out so loudly that one of the men effectually gagged him.

His legs were bound, his hands lashed to his sides, and they shoved him into the hole and filled it in.

His head and shoulders were above the level, but this did not matter much.

"It'll give him a chance to see around, it will, an' watch for the wolves an' the like," said the quartermaster. "Good-night, an' we hopes you'll enjoy it."

Then the gag was removed, the ends of his preposterously huge collar pulled up over his ears, an old felt hat—the pride of his heart—jammed

on the crown of his woolly head, and the party moved off.

While they were in hailing distance the quartermaster continued to ask:

"Where's Mr. Hardy? Are ye goin' ter tell us?"

But Sunbeam, with the cunning of his race, remained silent. He fondly expected that they would soon come back, believing his assertion and release him.

But they did not. They put off and rowed back to the ship, and reported.

"Mr. Hardy missing, sir; an' we can't make out what's come o' Sunbeam."

"Very well, we must wait till morning, and send a party to look for them."

Thus Sunbeam was left in the darkness and solitude of that deserted island.

They had buried him where the soil was sandy and soft, with nothing to obstruct his view of the shore, a prey to the most awful and heart-sickening terror.

He cried aloud to them to come back, but when by the flashing of lights on the distant vessel's deck he knew the boat had returned, his incessant howls were simply inhuman.

His terrified imagination conjured up all kinds of horrible shapes and figures, among them the shadowy form of young Hardy.

"I didn't do it; go 'way! Oh, gor'amighty, go 'way!" he screeched, shutting his eyes and sobbing till the glands of his throat grew parched and swelled so that he lost his voice, and his head fell forward in unconsciousness.

The light of day brought with it some sense of relief from the horrors of the night, but a raging thirst seized him, and to his dismay he beheld the Wildcat sailing away round the island.

"Mr. Gary," said the captain of the Wildcat, as the sun arose, "go ashore, and look for Mr. Hardy and that thieving scamp, Sunbeam."

"Yes, sir," said the youthful officer, Mr. Gary. "Scour the island; he must be found, dead or alive."

Gary saluted, and the boat pushed off. When they landed he divided his party, taking Charley with him.

He had not proceeded far when his ears were saluted with a series of dreadful yells.

Charley became all eyes, and his teeth chattered.

"What dat, Massa Gary?"

"We'll soon find out—sounds like a human voice somewhat."

"Not a bit, sar; more like debbil."

"Nonsense," smiled Gary; and he walked on in the direction where the sounds came.

"Good heavens, why, it's Sunbeam, buried alive."

The unhappy Sunbeam was so excited, and his feelings so overwrought, that he scarcely seemed to recognize his friends, and continued to perform the most ludicrous facile contortions, and cry in a low, hoarse way as if he were rapidly expiring.

Gary signaled to some of the men, who at once joined him; they looked guilty, and let the cat out of the bag.

Gary's eyes flashed.

"By heavens, I'll leave you here to die unless you tell me what you did with Mr. Hardy."

Unable to bear the sufferings any longer, Sunbeam said he would tell him if he had a drink of water.

He had water, and was dragged out of the hole, but could not stand.

He told them where the ravine was, and said they would find Mr. Hardy down there.

Gary hastened away with a beating heart; the lad, Hardy, was his dearest friend, and his heart bled at the thought of possibly finding him dead.

Arriving at the ravine, what was his joy to see Hardy sitting by the stream, pale and haggard from pain, and bandaging his leg.

Maimed, but not killed; after all. He was carried tenderly on board and the story told, but the fearful night of being buried alive so preyed upon Sunbeam that young Hardy begged the captain not to punish him any further.

"Besides," he added, "it taught me a lesson, sir, to be a little more forbearing with those beneath me," as it did; while Sunbeam eschewed not only stealing but lying; thus was it a wholesome lesson after all, and he never forgot being buried alive.

BLACK-HEADED SEA BIRD'S LONG FLIGHT

Starting from a small solitary island near Japan, a black-headed albatross followed the steamship Wenatchee across the north Pacific for six days and seven nights, until it became an object of unusual interest among both passengers and crew and several big wagers as to its length of flight and duration of strength.

A too hearty breakfast tossed to it, by a passenger at the big odds end of a wager, caused the albatross to turn back on the seventh morning.

The Wenatchee is a new boat and in the open sea averaged seventeen knots per hour, but the storm bird did not tire. At times it freshened up somewhat and flew in great circles around the steamer. Because of its peculiar black head, in contrast to the natural silver-white plumage, the albatross was easily distinguished from others also in the wake of the big ship. One very stormy day the wind roared in a gale beating the ship with snow, hail and rain, but through the troubled elements the albatross flew alongside of the Wenatchee, sometimes screaming shrilly. Many on board believed the bird alighted in the rigging at night, but the crew at the watches declared they observed the albatross flitting at intervals through the rays of the cabin's lights.

Meat and bread tossed to the bird during the day was picked from the waves without the great wings being furled. For six days and seven nights the race kept all at fever heat with excitement, and when 3,000 miles from the Japanese island and following a greedy breakfast of meat and fish the albatross turned abruptly and was lost in the distant horizon. The Wenatchee was 1,900 miles from the nearest Alaska point, but the great storm bird is believed to have gone straight home.

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INTERESTING ARTICLES

MOUSE TRACKS IN SNOW

Prince William of Sweden obtained during his African hunting trip a fine zoological collection for the Royal Museum of Stockholm. In climbing great volcanoes to an altitude of 13,000 feet, says the Scientific American, he found snow on which were tracks of mice, although intense cold prevailed there.

80 PER CENT. OF WORLD'S AUTOS IN UNITED STATES

There are 12,588,949 automobiles in the world, according to the most reliable statistics obtainable, and with 463,448 Canada takes third place in possession among all countries, following the United States and Great Britain.

The United States is estimated as having 10,505,660 and Great Britain 497,582.

THE WORLD'S RICHEST GOLD REEF

Now that attention is being called to the Transvaal gold industry by the strike of the white miners on the Rand, it may be interesting to describe what the Johannesburg gold reef is really like.

Its developed area stretches from Johannesburg to Heidelberg, a distance of about forty miles, and from the top of some high building you may trace it clearly by the enormous mounds of white tailings, up to 3,000,000 tons in weight, that are dotted along its length.

They lie bleached and glaring in the sun, the fine dust of their surface blowing in the wind, and though attempts to grow grass upon them have been made, all have failed through the action of the cyanide with which they are impregnated.

The battery "stamps" are never silent. Night and day they are pounding up the rock, and there are certain spots in Johannesburg where you can hear them as you lie in bed in the stillness of the early hours like the regular beat of distant waves.

And sometimes, too, you will hear the muffled rumble of falling rock that shakes the houses and curiously resembles a genuine earthquake. Indeed, the mines in Johannesburg itself are now

mostly used up, and year by year the industry shifts farther to the east.

The mines themselves are like so many self-contained towns. A large mine, for instance, will employ 20,000 men and have a completeness of equipment both above and below the surface that is astonishing.

I have traveled 3,000 vertical feet into the earth at forty miles an hour in one of these mines and have found down there elaborate pumping machinery, electric trains, a crowd of men going about their business as if on the surface.

And above the hoisted rock is being pounded into powder, is passing over the mercury-coated slime-boards, is gradually being made to give up its treasure.

And then, of course, there is the social side of the mine, the trim quarters for the whites, the native compound with its up-to-date kitchens and bakehouse, the hospital accommodation. Yes, each mine is, as far as possible, complete in itself.

The final thing they show you when you visit a mine is the finished article. That is to say, when you have observed the whole vast complex energy of the machine they point out the results in a few bars of dull yellow metal.

I had heard some vague rumor that if you could lift one of them and carry it away you get it as a present, but I was hastily disillusioned before I could make the attempt. Perhaps they saw the look of desperate determination in my eyes.

LAUGHS

Willie—Paw, what is the age of discretion?
Paw—That's when a man is too old to have any fun, my son.

"How are you feeling to-day?" asked the physician. And the man with the gout murmured, painfully: "I can't kick, doctor."

Employee—I would like more salary. I am going to get married!
Employer—Sorry, but I'll have to reduce it. I am going to get married myself.

He—Do you think kissing is as dangerous as the doctors say?
She—Well, it has certainly put an end to a good many confirmed bachelors, at any rate.

"My husband had to wait nearly an hour while I got ready, but he never complained a bit. "Then he's different from mine. Where were you going?" "Shopping."

Gibbs—So your wife quarreled with you. I thought you said she was blind to your faults?
Dibbs—She was blind to them, all right, but she wasn't deaf, and the neighbors posted her.

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FROM ALL POINTS

CHICKENS IN MAIL

None the worse for thirty-six hours of travel in disagreeable weather, 1,200 baby chicks were received at the Sioux City, Iowa, post-office the other morning from Central Hall, Pa. The chicks were delivered to C. Roma, No. 3501 Pearl street. According to Postmaster W. H. Jones, this is the largest single consignment of chicks ever sent through the post-office here. The chicks were in a pasteboard box containing many small perforations for air.

FIVE HUGE GORILLAS BAGGED

After six months of tracking gorillas through the jungles of equatorial Africa, Dr. Carl E. Akeley is back in New York, not a member of his party missing. On board a freighter following him from the Belgian Congo is his baggage—the shaggy hides of five monstrous gorillas.

Besides the coats of his victims, the big game hunter is bringing back a number of extraordinary photographs and some precious data for the American Museum of Natural History. Being also a taxidermist, he expects to mount the gorilla skins.

This Simian quintet, says Dr. Akeley, will surpass any group of its kind in the world. He bagged all five in that wild region west of Lake Victoria Nyanza at the easternmost extremity of the Congo, where never a white woman had been seen until Dr. Akeley's party entered.

The gorillas were not savage, reports Dr. Akeley. It was rather poor sport shooting them. The explorer got far more joy out of clicking a movie camera at them. The beasts often ran into hiding when the camera clicked, never threatening to attack him with any of that savage ferocity usually attributed to gorillas.

In Dr. Akeley's party, which returned on the White Star liner Baltic, was little Alice Hastings Bradley, 6 years old, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert E. Bradley, of Chicago. She was the first white child the natives of the Congo belt had ever seen. They especially fancied her long golden curls, which—much to the surprise of one African chief—didn't come off. He thought that her coiffure, like that of his women, was detachable.

The women in Dr. Akeley's party—Miss Martha Miller, Mrs. Bradley and Miss Priscilla Hall—wore Khaki shirts, trousers and puttees. They did not suffer from the heat, since the gorilla land was high in altitude. Mrs. Bradley says she felt much safer there than she does here, dodging Broadway motor cars.

OLYMPIC GAMES IN HISTORY

The foundation of the Olympic games dates so far back into antiquity that it is legendary, being attributed to Hercules, Pelops and other myths of ancient Greece. The games took their name from Olympia, the place where they were held.

The Olympic games became the most famous of the national festivals of the Greeks. They partook of the nature of a modern world's fair;

envoys were sent throughout the kingdom to invite the States to send contestants and do honor to the god Zeus. People gathered from all quarters, bringing with them sacrifices for the gods, and vying with one another in the splendor and munificence of their offerings. Merchants and traders from far and near took advantage of the occasion to reap a harvest; even poets, orators and artists, who were held in greater reverence than they are to-day, were there to sell their works and to advertise themselves to the world. It is interesting to compare the modern athletic field and its crowd of "rooters" with the sacred surroundings of the ancient Greek contests, which were started off with a sacrifice to the idol gods. The centuries seem to shrink, the lapse of time becomes less overpowering, and the dim past is brought nearer to us, when we realize that in the year 1920 A. D. there is being continued in Antwerp an institution that originated more than 2,100 years ago.

The qualifications for entrants in the Olympic games required them to be of Greek descent and free from "taint of impiety, blood guiltiness, or grave breach of the laws." All contestants were required to train faithfully for ten months preceding the games, the last month being on the grounds under the supervision of the officials. The first day of the "meet" was taken up with sacrifices to the various gods and to taking the oaths; the officials swore to judge fairly and the contestants swore that they had observed the rules for training and would compete fairly. The rules in the various contests were not the same 2,000 years ago as they are to-day; in wrestling, for example, all that was required for a decision was to throw the opponent to the ground three times. Boxing was no ping-pong party; at one stage of its development the contestants wore leather thongs weighted with chunks of metal; this "boxing glove" was called the cestus; the contest, however, seems to have been one of exhaustion rather than of slugging. The pentathlon ("penta" meaning five) consisted of running, jumping, wrestling, throwing the discus and the javelin; the run was one stadion in length; the jumping was for distance, probably a hop, step and jump, as one of the ancients cleared fifty-five feet; the javelin was a light spear thrown by means of a strap attached to it; the discus was likely heavier than at present, the ancient Greek record being about 100 feet.

The victors in the ancient Olympic games received only a crown of wild olive leaves; their true reward came when they returned to their home towns, where they were received as conquering heroes, driven into the town in triumph in a chariot through a breach in the walls (the ordinary gate not being good enough for them), with pretty Greek maidens strewing flowers in their path, women singing songs of praise and everybody in general giving them welcome.

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GOOD READING

GOLD BARS FOR POLAND

Gold bars, diamonds and other precious stones valued at 10,000,000 gold rubles, or approximately \$5,000,000, have been received by the Polish Government from Soviet Russia in lieu of rolling stock due Poland by virtue of the Riga peace treaty of 1921. This is the second installment, the first payment of gold and precious stones having been made last December. The shipment came in special cars convoyed by armed guards and upon its arrival in Warsaw the gold and stones were placed in vaults of the Polish Government bank.

ODD FACTS ABOUT NEW YORK

The amount of water used daily by the people of the greater city would make a lake which would be exactly one mile long, half a mile wide and seven feet deep. In other words, it is 740,000,000 gallons.

The number of persons walking up and down Fifth avenue at Forty-second street in the daytime averages about 13,000 to the hour. The official figures are, 129,930 for the ten hours between 8:30 a. m. and 6:30 p. m. The vehicles passing at the same time number 14,182. The pedestrians passing up and down Broadway at Forty-second street during the same ten hours averages 111,306, and the vehicles number 16,280. On Fifth avenue, at Thirty-fourth street, the pedestrians number 71,500 and the vehicles 16,930.

The total length of Manhattan Bridge is two miles less 1,230 feet. Williamsburg Bridge is 7,200 feet and the old Brooklyn Bridge is 6,537 feet.

The wharves and docks of New York, not including those on the New Jersey side, number 713.

Place all the streets of the greater city end to end and it is safe to say you would have a street that would reach across the continent. The streets of Manhattan, a borough which is more "confined" than some of the others, have an aggregate length of 186.5 miles.

The number of dead bodies found in the city in 1920 was 554, of which 470 were males. All of these were unknown when found, but nearly all were later identified. The persons reported missing in the same year were 6,670, nearly all of whom were traced by the police. Inquiries for many others were made, but the number stated are regarded as the actual missing.

The deepest part of New York Bay is at the southern end of the Narrows. The depth there is 109 feet. In some places out some distance from shore it becomes as shallow as fifteen feet. The greatest depth of the Hudson opposite the Battery is fifty-two feet. It is from fifty-two to fifty-seven feet deep opposite Central Park. Opposite Fifty-ninth street in the river the depth to bedrock is 125 feet, but about seventy-five feet of mud and silt lie on this bedrock under the water.

In round figures and allowing for the changes

wrought by tides the width of the Hudson opposite the Battery is 1,500 yards; at Fifty-ninth street it is 1,200 yards, and at Fortieth street 1,400 yards.

The city government owns or leases 2,900 buildings, whose annual lighting bill amounts of \$918,916. The electric bulbs for these buildings alone cost about \$100,000 annually, according to the officials of the Lighting Department.

ORIGIN OF SEA TERMS

The origin of many nautical terms undoubtedly will surprise many of us. Take the word Admiral. How many people think of it, except as a thoroughly English word; yet its origin is *Emir le Bagh*, Arabic for "Lord of the Sea." Captain comes direct from the Latin *caput*, a head; but the word mate owes nothing to any dead language, being almost identical with the Icelandic *mati*, which means a companion or equal.

Originally coxswain was the man who pulled the after oar of the captain's boat, then known as a cock boat. "Cock boat" is a corruption of the word coracle, and the coracle is a small round boat used for fishing. So coxswain comes to us from the Welsh. Commodore is the Italian *Comandatore*, or commander, and naval cadet was originally the French *capdet*, which, going a step further back, has the same origin as the word captain.

We frequently hear of "Davy Jones." There never was such a person; but speak of "Duffy Jonah's locker" and you have the original term. "Duffy" is the West Indian negro term for spirit or ghost, while "Jonah" refers to the prophet of that name. "Dog watch" comes from "Dodge" watch. This "Dodge" is to enable the men to "dodge" being on duty every day at the same hours.

Three thousand years ago rope was made from bulrushes, the Latin name for which is *juncus*, so we have the nautical term "junk" for a rope's end, and the sailors carry the word a step further, and call their meat "junk." The words starboard and larboard (the latter known as port to-day) have developed in an interesting manner. Starboard has nothing whatever to do with stars, but really is steoar board, Anglo-Saxon for steer side, because when the old galleys were used they were steered by an oar fixed to the right hand side of the stern, and the inboard portion was held by the helmsman in his right hand. Larboard is probably a corruption of lower board or side, as it originally was considered inferior to the starboard.

"Jury mast," which sounds as if it had something to do with a law court jury, is quite innocent, although both words come from the same *jour*, the French for "day." Jury mast thus means a mast that is put up temporarily—for a day—just as jury in the legal term implies a tribunal summoned for a short period only.

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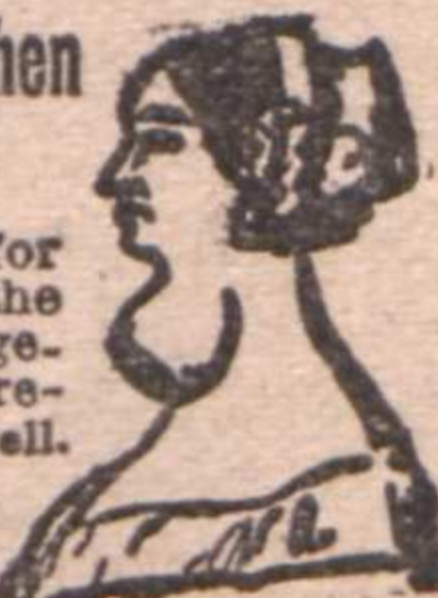
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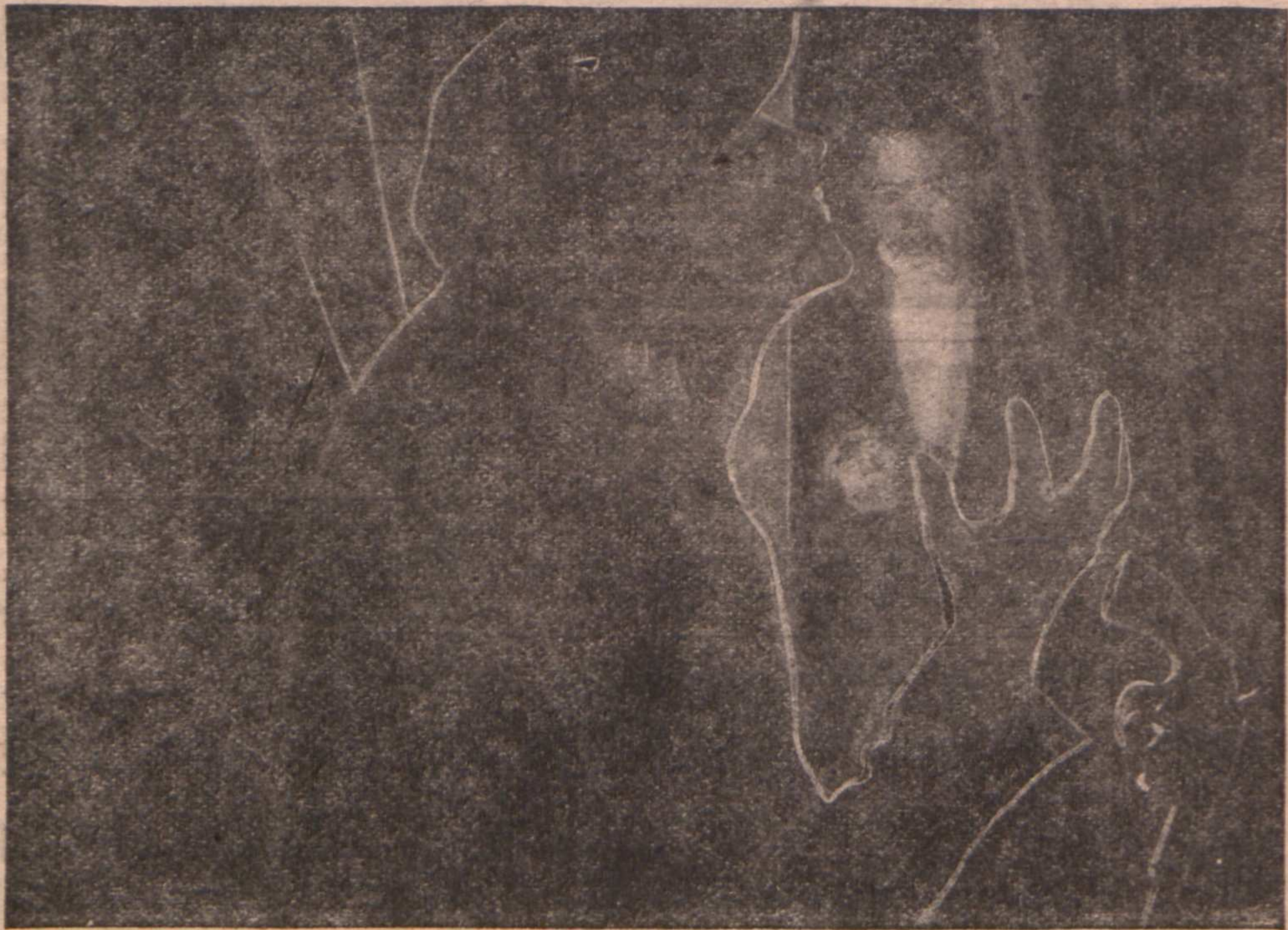
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